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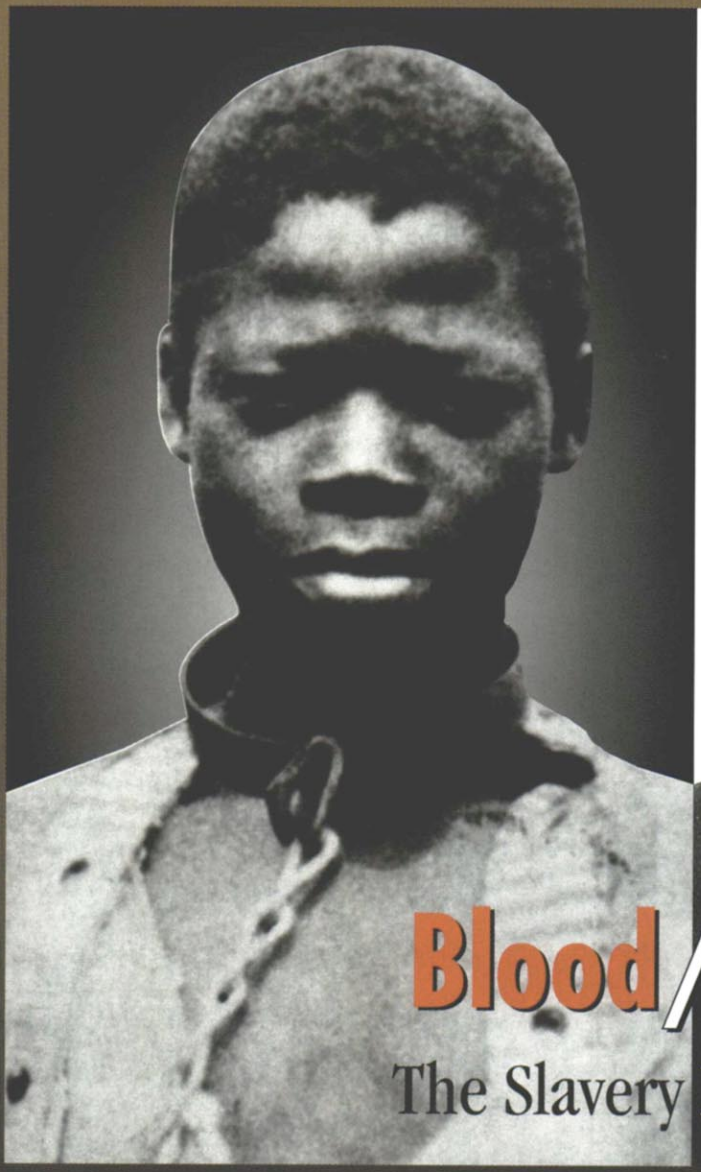

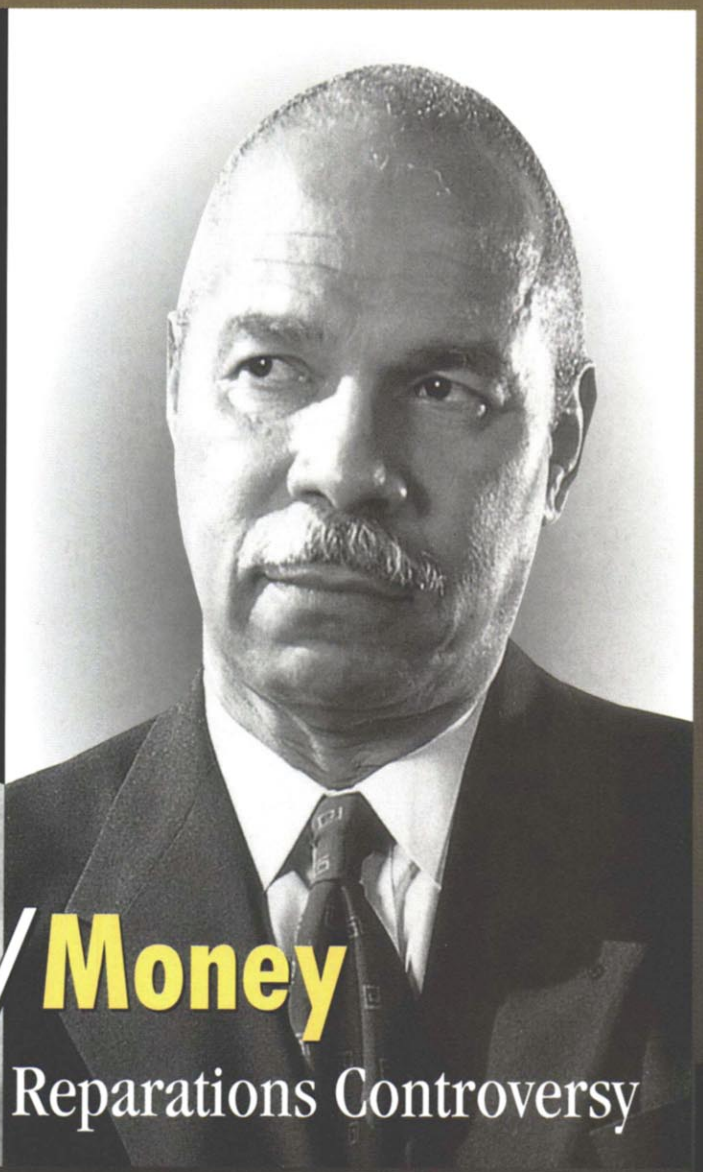

Blood/Money

The Slavery Reparations Controversy

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VOLUME 12, NUMBER 5

JULY/AUGUST 2001

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A world of ideas on public policy.

Burying the big population story

by Ben J. Wattenberg

The overwhelming demographic story of our time has somehow failed to make it into the headlines. Here it is, in short: Never have birth and fertility rates fallen so far, so fast, so low, for so long, all over the world, already yielding some population decline, with much more to come. That story continues to be buried by the noise of "the population explosion", a powerful trend that peaked decades ago, but which is still promoted by environmental alarmists and their allies.

Recently, however, the United Nations Population Division had started "unburying" the facts. Some projection techniques were modified to partially account for starkly falling fertility. The UN's "Replacement Migration: Is it a Solution to Declining and Aging Populations?" caused a firestorm. It predicted that European nations will either take in large numbers of immigrants, or suffer grievous economic damages.

But now, alas, the recent release of the "highlights" of the new UN biennial reference book "World Population Prospects – The 2000 Revisions", once again buries the big story. That is too bad, because only the UN has the standing to correct the central misconception of our time.

Consider the gist of the first four items of the executive summary of the document. World population is growing by 77 million per year, going from 6.1 billion today to 9.3 billion in 2050, according to the "medium variant" projection. The gain will come entirely in the Less Developed Regions (LDR), even though the LDR "projection assumes continuing declines in fertility". The population of the modern "More Developed Regions" (MDR) is "anticipated to change little". The 2050 global projection comes out at 413 million more people than previously reported.

Shouldn't we be investing more in improving healthcare and education in the less developed regions where populations are growing?

"More people" was the functional UN lead, and that is how the Associated Press, among other news organizations, reported the story. But saying that developed nations won't lose population in the next 50 years is simply not accurate. Europe, Japan and almost every other developed country will suffer severe population losses, while the United States is projected to grow.

Thus, the 2000 population of Europe is 727 million and the UN's "medium" projection for 2050 is 603 million – a loss of 124 million people or 17%, an unprecedented drop. The "low" (and probably more likely) projection puts Europe at 556 million – a loss of 171 million or 24%.

America, on the other hand, is slated to grow from 283 million today to 397 million in 2050. But that American projection assumes increasing fertility and immigration, which is dubious. American fertility has been below the replacement rate of 2.1 children per woman for 30 consecutive years. Why would it go up? It is equally unlikely that immigration will go up, given trends elsewhere. Demographers say that Mexico, for example, has already breached the 2.1 rate, down from a 1965-70 rate of 6.8 children. Like Mexico, there are already 21 nations from the LDR that have fertility rates below the replacement rate, including China, Thailand, Cuba, both North and South Korea, and Kazakhstan.

The problem is not that the UN has made poor projections, but that it labels fairly high projections as "medium". That word is immediately misinterpreted as "most likely", and in the media it is then further transmuted into "fact". And so we read that the UN is predicting that the world population will rise from about 6 billion to about 9 billion and keep growing – instead of a more likely course of going from 6 billion to about 8 billion and declining.

There is a big difference between growing and declining, especially when we consider the serious policy implications of population decline. How will the developed countries sustain their healthcare and pension systems if their populations are aging even more rapidly than we had thought? And shouldn't we be investing more – much more – in improving healthcare and education in the less developed regions where populations are growing? Reporting growth when the likelihood is decline postpones consideration of these serious issues. And that is why burying the big story can be dangerous.

Ben J. Wattenberg is a Senior Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI). His most recent book, The First Measured Century, is available from AEI, 1150 Fifteenth Street, Washington, D.C. (www.aei.org).

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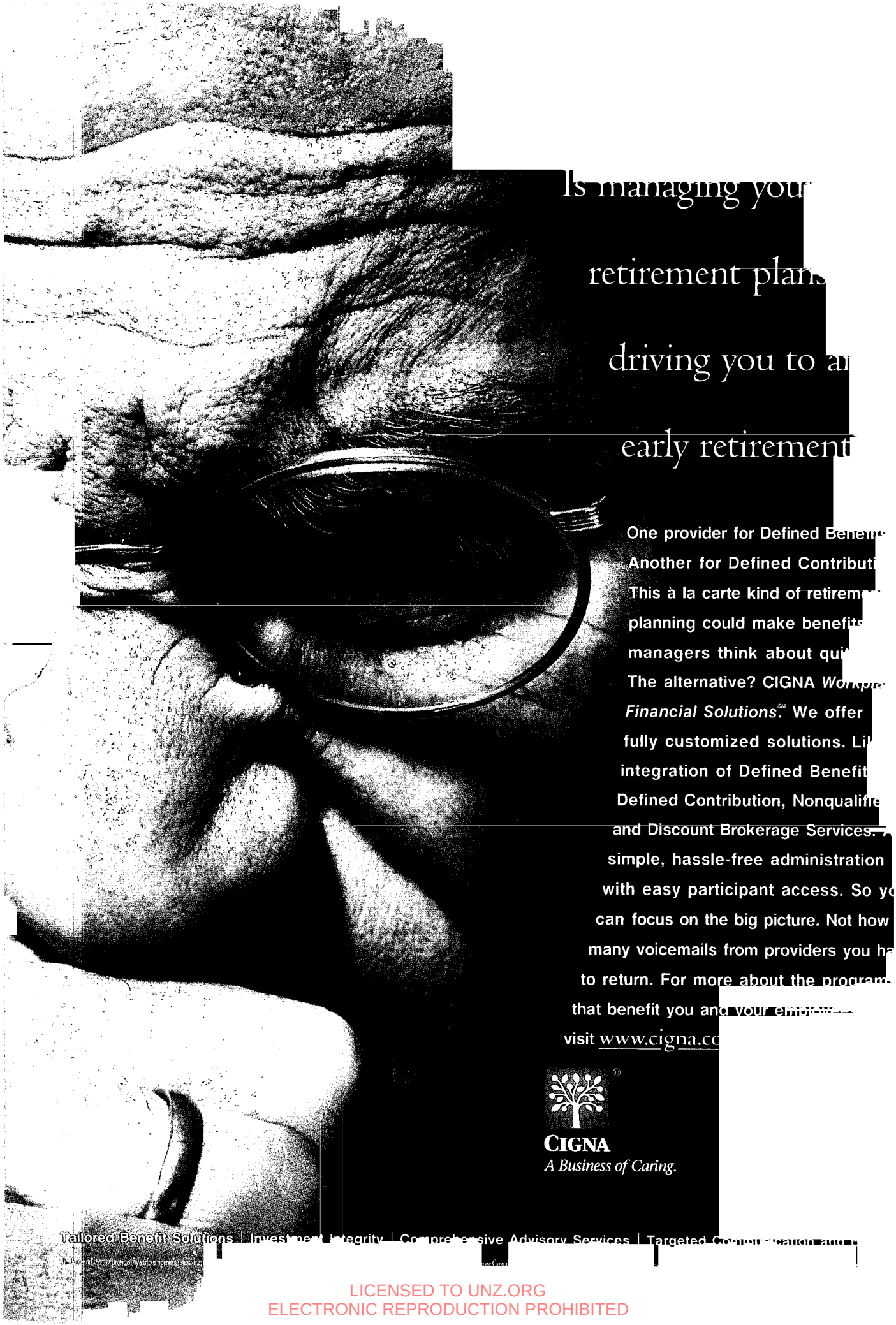

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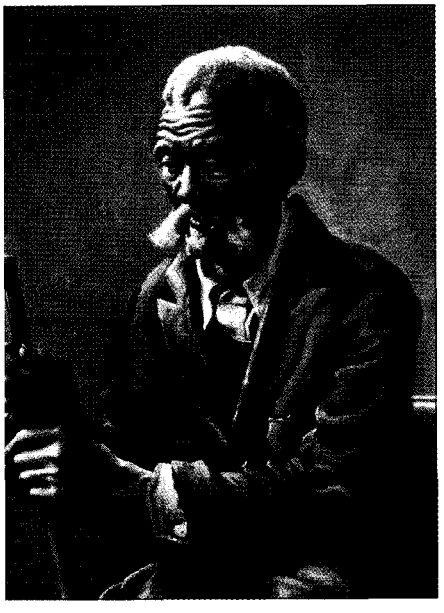

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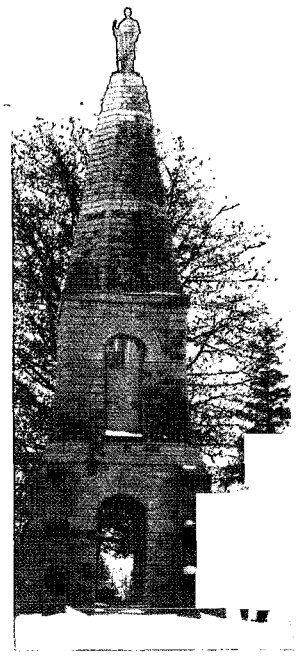

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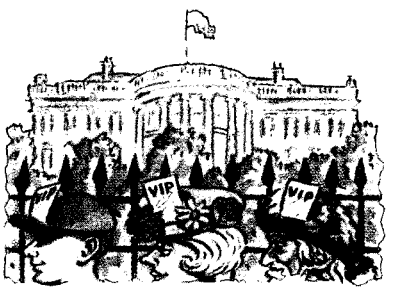

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Bird's Eye

Karl Zinsmeister

Has the Debt Been Paid?

The activist campaign demanding payment of "slavery reparations" to today's black Americans probably strikes some readers as too far-fetched to take seriously. Better stop and look afresh. I myself realized that the concept had moved beyond faculty lounges, radical salons, and afrocentric pamphlets and into the realm of serious political struggle when I looked over the roster of a legal group convened to plot practical strategy for winning such compensation. It included not only DreamTeamer Johnny Cochran, Harvard Law School professor Charles Ogletree, and other ideologically predictable backers, but also one Richard J. Scruggs.

Scruggs is a white Mississippi trial lawyer with a single interest: causes which have a good chance of winning him lots of money. He is in the process of collecting billions of dollars (literally) for his part in the 1998 tobacco settlement. He is next trying to shake down HMOs and other unpopular businesses with the threat of legal action. He has his finger in dozens of other polemicized class-action suits. Scruggs also happens to be the brother-in-law of Republican Senator Trent Lott. When legal vultures like Scruggs, Dennis Sweet (hyper rich from Fen-phen diet pill suits), and class-action specialists Willie Gary and Alexander Pires begin to circle—they're all currently members of a "Reparations Assessment Group" which has both government and major corporations in its sights—some juicy carcass is usually about to be picked clean.

There are other hints that the push for payments to slave descendants is gaining momentum. Over the last year, a dozen big-city councils have passed resolutions calling on the federal government to investigate reparations payments. Representative John Conyers has a bill in Congress that would require that. Representative Tony Hall, a white born-again Christian, is pushing a different proposal that would take up reparations; Republican congressman J.C. Watts has expressed guarded support. Quasi-conservative *Washington Post* columnist Charles Krauthammer wrote a column in April proposing to give African-American families a lump sum of $50,000 each.

Among blacks on the street, meanwhile, interest in reparations is shifting from pipe dream to popular demand. When I was in Dallas last year I heard hortatory ads by pro-reparations groups on black radio stations. Longstanding activist calls for black taxpayers to deduct "slavery credits" from their tax payments are being heeded by more African Americans. The IRS field office responsible for the region stretching just from northern Virginia to Delaware received 500 tax returns claiming such a credit (illegitimately) last year. "We're not talking about welfare. We're talking about back pay," is how the executive editor of *Ebony* magazine now describes reparations. Overall, polls show that most black Americans support having the government make slavery-restitution payments (see page 61)—in some surveys by considerably more than two-to-one.

This subject is not going to just quietly go away, as many Americans probably wish it would. The question must be faced. Are there merits to the case for slavery reparations?

I myself would characterize reparations as a good idea whose time has come and long since gone. In the years leading up to the Civil War there were various proposals for ending slavery through government payments. Lincoln called for federal compensation to states according to the number of slaves they emancipated. A portion of these payments could have

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been used to help the freed blacks establish themselves in a new life. Unfortunately, nothing came of this.

After financial dickering gave way to war, Union General William Sherman issued his famous field order decreeing that all freed slaves should be issued a mule and forty acres of land appropriated from plantation owners. But this was later countermanded. Much to the frustration of Republicans, new President Andrew Johnson vetoed such payments.

Rehashing historical offenses is rarely constructive—especially since there are so many, extending in all directions.

The result—a miserable one for blacks and for our nation—was that slaves, though liberated, were not provided any resources to help them transform themselves into self-supporting Americans. The "new Negro," Frederick Douglass wrote, "had neither money, property, nor friends. He was free from the old plantation, but he had nothing but the dusty road under his feet.... He was turned loose naked, hungry, and destitute to the open sky."

If cash had been spent as it should have been in the 1850s or '60s on reparations to slaves and indemnities to slaveowners, a terrible war might have been avoided. If money had been spent as it should have been during early Reconstruction to help the victims of slavery get themselves on their feet, a subsequent century of degrading poverty and segregation among blacks could have been mitigated.

But those opportunities were squandered, and there is no way to get them back. As black economist Walter Williams summarizes, "Slavery was a gross violation of human rights. Justice would demand that slave owners make compensatory reparation payments to slaves. Yet since both slaves and slave owners are no longer with us, compensation is beyond our reach."

Ah, but even with all the parties involved long dead, couldn't we make *some* sort of cleansing payment that would set things right? The answer is no. The two favorite models for slave reparations—payments to Holocaust victims and interned Japanese-Americans—are utterly different situations, because in those cases the injured parties and the injurers are still alive, and able to make direct restitution, one to another.

Meanwhile the identities of "slave" and "slaveholder" have blurred and melted away over the generations to the point where it is now impossible to say who would pay and who would receive in any accounting for slavery. There are plenty of Americans who have members of *both* groups in their family trees. The vast majority of us have *neither*—we weren't slaves; we weren't slave masters. Indeed, the majority of today's Americans descend from people who *were not even in America* when slavery was practiced. And of the people who *were* here, a much larger number fought against slavery than practiced it.

It gets even messier than that. There were, for instance, approximately 12,000 black freemen living in the Confederacy who themselves owned slaves. Moreover, most of the individuals who came to America as slaves were dispatched into that state by other blacks in Africa. Who owes whom what in these cases?

The villains and the heroes of slavery have evaporated into the misty vapors of our past, and are now impossible to delineate clearly or bring to justice. Trying to pay slave reparations in our current decade would, as one observer puts it, mostly be a case of individuals who were never slaveholders giving money to people who were never slaves. A clear absurdity.

Political scientist Adolph Reed wrote recently in *The Progressive* that the only certain result of a reparations program would be to "produce a lively trade for genealogists, DNA testers, and other such quacks." Even Holocaust reparations—which are much simpler transfers directly to still-living victims—have turned extraordinarily unseemly and debasing. As Gabriel Schoenfeld noted recently in *Commentary*, "In the free-for-all to obtain Holocaust victims as clients...competing lawyers from the United States have barnstormed across Europe soliciting clients, publicly castigating each other, and privately maneuvering to oust their adversaries." If you think a subject as somber as slavery wouldn't be exploited (and ultimately decay into grasping, self-serving tawdriness) the second financial opportunism became possible, think again.

American blacks would take little solace from simply being told it's too late for restitution, that practical impossibilities leave reparations for slavery out of reach. But that's not the whole story. The whole truth, which ought to offer black America real peace, is that the U.S. already made a mighty payment for the sin of slavery. It was called the Civil War.

I first decided to put together a *TAE* issue on this subject almost exactly two years ago, when my hometown newspaper ran a Memorial Day ad honoring local men who had been killed in America's wars. The ad listed the names of 85 individuals who had died fighting the Civil War. I later did some research and discovered that the complete total for the three small towns that comprise our local school district was 105 killed.

The thing you need to know to put that figure in perspective is that our rural village contains less than 3,000 people (and was not much different then). The surrounding towns add a couple thousand more. For our little community to have offered up 105 young men to be swallowed by the grave—most all of them between 18 and 29, the records show—was a great sacrifice.

Cazenovia's example was not a bit unusual. In all, more than 620,000 Americans died in the struggle to eliminate slavery. That is more than the number killed in all of our other wars *combined*. It amounted to a staggering 1.8 percent of our total population in 1865. That would be the equivalent of killing more than *5 million* young Americans today.

The crux that defined and drove this ferocious fratricide was a determination to purge ourselves of slavery. It would be hard to overstate the pain and pathos involved in bringing that decision to its conclusion. President Lincoln's own family is an example: No fewer than seven of his brothers-in-law fought for the Confederacy; two were killed in battle. Yet Lincoln never wavered in doing what was right.

Though they are often now ignored, our nation is peppered with many powerful Civil War memorials. Pictured on the next page is a monument located down the road from my own home in New York state. Erected by a village of about 5,000 people, it

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hints at the magnitude of feeling which went into America's struggle to end enforced servitude. Our nation surely did run up a "debt" (as reparations advocates like Randall Robinson—who is pictured on our cover—like to put it) for allowing black bondage. But that bill was finally paid off, in blood.

And not *only* in blood. After tardily recognizing their error, Americans have tried to compensate for the historic harm visited upon African Americans. The massive infusions of money into income support, education, and special programs to benefit blacks that activists like Robinson are now calling for have already been offered up. Economist Walter Williams notes that over the last generation the American people have particularly targeted the black underclass with more than $6.1 trillion in anti-poverty spending. Private and governmental agencies have tried to improve black socioeconomic status with measures ranging from affirmative action to massive philanthropic efforts. And as our two cover essayists, John McWhorter and Deroy Murdock, point out on pages 19-23, American blacks have made remarkable progress.

Civil War monument in Skaneateles, N.Y.

The Syracuse Newspapers

But to the activists, this is not nearly enough. Perhaps there can never be enough done to placate them, because many are driven by an implacable sense of grievance more than a practical desire to see blacks flourish. In his book *The Debt*, Randall Robinson insists that blacks do not like America, and cannot be part of it. It's clear that is his own posture, and he actively urges other African Americans to share it. "*You are owed,*" he tells his audience. "*They did this to you*" (with the italic emphasis in his text).

This is a poisonous political path. It will be psychologically unhealthy for many blacks, and it is very likely to inspire a nasty backlash among other Americans. In his thorough article on Holocaust reparations (which, again, are far more solidly founded, because the actual victims are still with us) Gabriel Schoenfeld points out that renewed pressure on Europeans over Nazi-era atrocities has unleased on that continent "a tide of anti-Semitic feeling unseen since the pre-World War II era." Aggressive reparations demands have created resentment both among intellectuals and on the streets, in the political arena as well as in social life.

Rehashing historical offenses is rarely constructive—especially since there are so many, extending in all directions and involving all races and groups. Despite the common references to slavery as America's "peculiar institution," the reality is that until the early nineteenth century there was hardly a country on earth without some kind of institutionalized slavery. One of my great-great-great-grandfathers, Mark Staggers, arrived here from England as a "bound boy"—in an indentured servitude which lasted for the rest of his childhood and much of his young adult years. My German ancestors were poor tenant farmers—the European equivalent of sharecroppers—who were repeatedly abused by Napoleon during the very years when U.S. slavery was at its peak.

Human bondage was not an American invention, it was a condition suffered by many people in many places across time. The northern U.S. states that outlawed slavery were among the first governments on the globe to do so. Rather than being some unique American stain, slavery was actually a commonplace sin, and almost six generations have now passed since it was outlawed throughout our land.

And balancing the ugliness of historical slavery in our country is the contemporary reality of enormous freedom and opportunity. Reparations activists will never say it so I will: Despite some harsh imperfections, America has, on the whole, been good to blacks, just as it has been good to other struggling groups who washed up on these shores. As economist Williams writes: "Most black Americans are middle class. And almost every black American's income is higher as a result of being born in the United States than in any country in Africa."

In the process of taming the wilderness, America's Anglo pioneers suffered heavily from human cruelty, natural disaster, disease, and deprivation. Even the most successful families sacrificed over and over. Of the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence to launch America, nine died of wounds or hardship during the Revolutionary War, five were captured or imprisoned, many had wives and children who were killed or imprisoned, 12 had their houses burned to the ground, 17 lost everything they owned, a number died bankrupt and in rags.

Those who followed bore other burdens. The Irish were felled in great numbers building our first canals and railways. Southern Europeans, Asians, Hispanics, and many other immigrants endured long indignities and drudging work helping to civilize a new land. The American society that sprang from the hardships endured by our ancestors now belongs to each of us—very much including blacks, who were some of our earliest arrivals.

There is no perfect accounting in the cosmos, and none of us sitting here in twenty-first-century America really did much to "deserve" the prosperity, pleasure, and long life that our country presently allows (to the great envy of the rest of humanity). We—including those of us who are black—are just lucky to be able to profit from those earlier sacrifices.

The American blessing is available today to every citizen, regardless of how rocky our family's entry into the country. There is no "us" or "them" to give manna, or take it, only a heavily interwoven "we" who share a common interest in the success of our one system. The ultimate compensation America offers current residents is a seat in the free-est and richest society yet created by man. It's the final payment, a gift to one and all.

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Sidelights

The New Black Panther Party plans to protest **Bill Clinton**'s decision to open offices in Harlem. "There goes the neighborhood," said politician and Panther supporter **Charles Barron**. ❦ The Atlanta office of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission faces two age discrimination lawsuits. One of the plaintiffs worked 25-years as an EEOC civil rights attorney before allegedly being forced into retirement. ❦ Delta will pay Western Michigan University $1.65 million to train at least 24 new "multicultural" pilots. Graduates of the program will be given priority employment consideration by the airline. ❦ American Indians are victims of violence at a rate more than twice that of blacks, whites, or Asians, according to the Justice Department. American Indians make up 0.5 percent of the U.S. population, but account for 1.3 percent of all violent-crime victims. ❦ Four New York teens face up to 20 years in prison for burning new homes in the name of the Earth Liberation Front (ELF). · · · ELF claims to have destroyed $37 million in property throughout the U.S. ❦ After two decades of decline, demand for beef in the U.S. has risen by over 6 percent in the last two years. Demand for chicken has fallen by 2.6 percent. · · · The president of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, **Ingrid Newkirk**, hopes foot-and-mouth disease enters the U.S. "It will be good for animals, good for human health, and good for the environment," she argues. · · · Taiwan has banned the butchering or selling of dog meat, a winter delicacy. ❦ The Justice Department reported that the Immigration and Naturalization Service cannot account for more than 61,000 items, including 539 weapons and 12,000 laptop computers, worth around $70 million. · · · Washington, D.C.'s Humane Society pleaded guilty to mishandling, and often killing, nearly 900 federally protected birds over the last four years. ❦ The number of Web-surfers in China has soared from 250 in 1992 to 15 million today. By 2004, 50 to 120 million Chinese may be online. · · · South Koreans lead the world in average time spent on the Internet, followed by Hong Kong and the U.S.

A teaching guide called "Taking Sex Seriously" has been approved for use in Scottish schools. The guide suggests that children as young as 11 be encouraged to discuss sexual acts, including sado-masochism and group sex. ❦ A Syracuse junior high schooler set off a panic when another student claimed to have heard him saying something about a gun. The school was sealed off, and lockers and classrooms were searched for weapons. It was a false alarm: The subject of the misheard conversation was *Dunn*'s Bakery. · · · Two New Jersey high school students were suspended for wearing T-shirts with the word "redneck" on them. The school finds the term offensive. One of the students asks, "How is saying 'redneck' offensive to anybody?" ❦ **Kevin Costner** sat next to **Fidel Castro** at a screening of Costner's Cuban Missile Crisis film *Thirteen Days*, held at the Palace of the Revolution in Cuba. ❦ The American Italian Defense Association plans to sue the producers of the "The Sopranos" for offending the "dignity" of Italian Americans. · · · A pollster for gubernatorial candidate **Andrew Cuomo** is asking New Yorkers for their opinions on how Italian Americans are portrayed on the hit HBO series. ❦ **Chevy Chase** tells a Harvard crowd why he satirized **Gerald Ford** on "Saturday Night Live": "I was a liberal Democrat…I just wanted to prevent him from being President." His advice to other political comics? "Be funny…Be compassionate…Take drugs." ❦ Latino business ownership increased by 30 percent in the 1990s, with revenues growing around 50 percent. Latinos own 6 percent of America's businesses. ❦ About 12 percent of all individual income-tax receipts will come from capital gains this year. · · · The average tax liability for a deceased widow is over $294,000, according to the IRS. · · · Over 90 percent of black- or Hispanic-owned businesses are subject to the estate tax. · · · 350,000 acres of forests are cut down each year to pay off federal estate taxes, a Mississippi State University and U.S. Forest Service study found. ❦ 84 percent of Americans with annual incomes of $50,000 or more describe themselves as "being in a good mood," according to a recent Gallup poll, compared to 72 percent of those earning $20,000 or less. ❦ Israeli Prime Minister **Ariel Sharon** finds it hard to concentrate when speaking with U.S. security adviser **Condoleeza Rice** "because she has very nice legs."

—*BB*

I just want to say, you impact me, Sylvia. Do I impact you?

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SCAN

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STEAL THIS MAGAZINE

The *New York Times Magazine* has long been known for its blend of left-leaning articles and ads catering to the wealthiest Americans. Feature stories laud liberal politicians and cutting-edge cultural trends. A weekly "Ethicist" column tries, for instance, to liberate readers from feeling obliged to practice private charity (support of the poor, you see, is really the government's duty). Sprinkled in between are ads for hip fashions, apartments and country estates costing millions, and expensive private schools and camps. Other items of interest to the rich include a "Luxury Travel Guide" and ads for "wealth management" services.

There is nothing novel, of course, about the phenomenon of "limousine liberals" who pride themselves on left-wing political sympathies without letting that cramp their indulgence in conspicuous consumption. Recently, however, disturbing new hints of outright moral nihilism have crept into the *Times Magazine*. Over the past several months it has published a story on a vicious Kentucky thug whom it treated as the moral equivalent of the crusading prosecutor he murdered; an "Endpaper" in which the author boasted of her youthful occupation of kidnapping dogs from wealthy Manhattan owners for ransom; a sympathetic account of a gay New Yorker who once participated in cannibalism while living and practicing group sex among a primitive Amazon tribe in the 1950s (a high point in his life); a feature on the "normalization" of the porn industry; and a story boosting the virtues of the illegal drug Ecstasy.

On April 8, there was a "How To" issue packed with "information you can use," as well as "some that may seem irrelevant but is pleasing and comforting to have just the same." Along with advice on "How to Fake Being a Bird-Watcher" it featured an entry on "How to Rob a Bank." This article, apparently based on the author's firsthand experience, provided tips on the type of bank to rob ("without too many customers to keep track of"), the best clothing to wear (something flashy, so once you change out of it after the crime, witnesses won't recall your physical features), and how "to intimidate onlookers and win cooperation" from victims.

One wonders what the editors were thinking. Even after the stock market crash, few in the *Times*' audience are likely (one hopes) to act on these hints. Most likely, the editors simply thought of the article as a way to demonstrate their fashionable freedom from conventional moral scruples.

Just in case any reader does attempt a bank robbery, the editors also included an article on "How to Defend Someone You Know Is Guilty." Apparently no one on the staff thought of offering "How to Preserve the Moral Foundations of a Civilized Society."

—**David Schaefer** *is a professor of political science at Holy Cross College.*

THE VIRTUAL COMMUNITY?

TAE has earlier reported scattered findings that Silicon Valley and other high-tech centers score low on measures of charitable donating, volunteering, church attendance, and other forms of social cooperation and generosity. Now a major new study known as the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey, directed by Harvard professor Robert Putnam and based on interviews with 30,000 Americans, confirms that Silicon Valley, San Francisco, Boston, Phoenix, and other tech meccas do indeed exhibit weak social and interpersonal connections.

On a scale where 100 equals the national average, Boston, for instance, scored only 71 for "giving and volunteering," 78 for "membership in charities and other groups," 83 in "civic leadership," 81 in "religious leadership," 81 in "social trust," and 77 in "informal community socializing." San Francisco and Silicon Valley had similar profiles.

Note to computer geeks and other professionals in these chic, wealthy, liberal urban centers: Get a life, preferably one that involves other people.

NEW ECONOMY, OLD HUBRIS

"It'll come back," the MBA-anointed sages droned as the once-invincible NASDAQ plummeted throughout the year 2000. "It's just a blip," said the 401(k) day traders as the air hissed out of the Internet bubble. "It surely can't get any worse," insisted many investors and brokers as 2001 dawned. The subsequent undulations through the spring haven't inspired great confidence, and last year's downturn looks as if it might be with us

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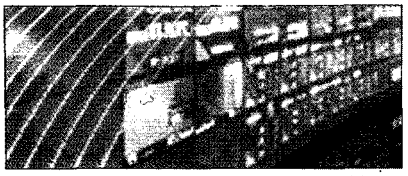
for some time to come.

We can legitimately call it the Crash of 2000. And it banged up lots of vehicles. I think of one broker, an associate of mine among the sea of cubicles and quotrons that we inhabited 23 floors above the cityscape. Over the last couple of years he staked his reputation, and his clients' futures, on the blinking symbols of the New Economy that flashed in green across his stock-quote screen. As the NASDAQ flare shot higher and higher he was tethered to his desk like a man possessed. He traded clients' money with frenzy, into and out of a multitude of "first mover" dot-coms, with their "unique platforms," and "scalable business models."

"This time it's different" insisted many young, Ivy-educated stock analysts, who never slept but were in bed with every company they covered. Rising interest rates don't affect technology firms, we heard. Internet "page views" are the New Economy's replacement for stodgy old yardsticks like revenues that exceed expenditures. Callers clamored for our IPOs like crack addicts, and even the most risk-averse investors called looking for a "hot stock" to buy. The parade was passing by, and nobody wanted to be left out.

Buyers weren't interested in gloom-and-doom talk. They came to expect that



every new account statement would bring them one stride closer to early retirement. I myself got caught up in the hype and easy money, supping in the corporate dining room with well-heeled clients and spewing glorious malarkey about ever-expanding P/E multiples and the endless promise of the New Economy.

My associate borrowed against his inflated equity and purchased a prized waterfront home, complete with hot tub, a garage for his German sports car, a gas-guzzling powerboat, and an equally expensive girlfriend. He said that after 18 years, he'd earned it.

But quickly, and without much warning from the herd of Wall Street strategists and CNBC talking heads, red numbers replaced green ones on our computer screens—with a vengeance. My associate peered into the ever-deepening abyss and reflexively repeated the pearls of wisdom of a veteran who'd been there before. "Markets do this," he said. "It should be expected." "We see these downturns from time to time." "Stocks will come back."

And indeed they will. The question, though, is whether they'll come back quickly, as they did following the 1987 collapse, or glacially, as they did after the 1973 calamity. For the moment, all that matters is that the nasty and brutish business cycle has evaporated some $3 trillion in asset values right out of the Technology Revolution.

Investors are once again realizing that trees don't grow to the sky along Wall Street. Last week, my associate resigned from the firm, saying he'd decided to pursue an opportunity with another brokerage house. In truth, his mortgage, the leased Mercedes, and the diminishing treasure of his dwindling pool of clients caught up with him.

—**Brooks Tucker** *is an investment advisor with a prominent Wall Street firm.*

REPEAT OFFENDER

From the minutes of the Kirby, Vermont Republican Town Caucus, back on April 24, 1984:

"The caucus then unanimously adopted the following resolution: Whereas, Congressman James M. Jeffords has compiled a voting record of the sort one would expect from a fellow who can't pour maple sap out of a boot, even with the instructions printed on the heel; and Whereas, instead of urging our Republican President Ronald Reagan to stand firm on his principles, Congressman James M. Jeffords has hollered bloody murder most every time he did so, thereby using him for a punching bag all over Washington and Vermont, if not the whole civilized world; and Whereas, if Congressman James M. Jeffords were ever put on trial for telling the straight truth about anything, no jury in Caledonia County would be likely to convict him; therefore be it Resolved by the Kirby Town Caucus, that the true Republicans of this town would cross hell on a rotten rail before they would vote for him again."

DON'T BANK ON 'EM

A few years ago, massive bank debts pushed Japan and other Asian economies into a deep recessionary hole. Most have yet to emerge. Could China be the next economy to get into trouble? At a recent American Enterprise Institute forum, leading China watchers warned that the policies of that nation's banks could lead to economic stagnation.

China's banks, which are mostly state-owned, are among the world's biggest financial institutions. But in the process of growing large these banks have accumulated massive portfolios of bad loans. "It's easy to become a big bank," said Brookings fellow Nicholas Lardy. "All you have to do is pass out money to everybody who walks by, and pretty soon your loan book will be huge."

But little of this credit was given to private businesses who need capital. Only 1 percent of Chinese bank loans went to private firms, even though these private companies generated wealth equal to 30 percent of the Chinese gross domestic product. Most loans are given to state-owned enterprises, who then squander the money.

In 1998, the governor of the Chinese central bank allowed lenders to write off 25 percent of their bad loans. The total amount was equal to 15 percent of Chinese GDP. This past January, the governor said an additional 25 percent of bank loans were dubious and might also have

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to be written off.

China's banks have other problems. They employ far too many people. In 1997, the four biggest banks totaled 1.6 million workers. In the past three years, these banks have shed 110,000 jobs, but far more will have to be cut if the firms are to become profitable. In addition, the Chinese Ministry of Finance employs what Princeton economist John Langlois called "highly repressive techniques" to prevent profits. Among them: a flat 8 percent tax on revenues, and a firm prohibition against banks deducting their losses and bad loans from their taxes.

Modernization has come to Chinese banks slowly. Mortgages, student loans, and other forms of consumer credit have only just been introduced to China, and already these loans are skyrocketing. But China's banks, the panelists concluded, must be reformed dramatically if that nation is ever going to be a place where private enterprise thrives.

SWISS NAVY MEETS EUROPEAN ARMY

From a recent lecture by former assistant secretary of defense and current AEI *scholar Richard Perle at London's Centre for Policy Studies:*

There has been a great deal of discussion in recent months about the effort of European Union members to establish for themselves a European defense force outside of NATO.

It is hard to get excited about bureaucratic contemplations of non-existent European military forces that would be pressed into the service of a non-existent common European foreign policy in instances where NATO had opted out.

What really seems to be at work here is a French-led plan to marginalize the Americans in Europe while keeping us sufficiently engaged so as to retain the military, intelligence, and logistic resources that we alone have been willing to produce and put at the disposal of the Europeans.

The inescapable truth is that defense capability requires investment. And that is precisely what the Europeans are not talking about. What they are talking about is how to organize and command their current, anemic forces through structures that do not include the United States and such other important NATO allies as Turkey and the newly admitted members from Central Europe.

If the Europeans who talk endlessly about the capabilities they simply don't have were serious about creating a credible defense force, they would start expending some money and effort on their own defense forces.

ON EATING DESSERT FIRST

An extract from one of the interviews in Iris Krasnow's new book Surrendering to Marriage:

In the 1950s, we married young, and generally did not have premarital sex, let alone live together before the wedding night. The way things are now—a prolonged period of living together and physical intimacy before marriage—that takes away the initial excitement of the first couple of years of marriage. It was so exciting when we got married and could sleep together! That new toy can sustain a marriage for the couple of years until the babies are born, and then the thrill about babies takes over.

Now couples have eaten dessert first, and the excitement is dwindling just as they are getting married. But they are still not ready to have children; so they become somewhat bored with one another. Many marriages are on the brink of tedium right from the start. Then the babies come, and it's a total disruption of the parents' already fragile interaction, and the marriage collapses. So I'm not sure this process of living together, which is supposed to reveal so much about the person you are thinking about marrying, is actually beneficial to the institution of marriage. It has a definite down side; in our generation, when you got married, there was this sexy, wonderful discovery of each other.

My marriage lasted nearly 40 years; Dick died seven years ago, just three months shy of our anniversary. Happiness is a very elusive quality, but I would say our marriage was rich, very rich.

RACIALISM ON CAMPUS

Ward Connerly, in an interview with Reason:

Universities are the most race-conscious institutions in America. Race seeps out of every pore.... They take these suburban kids who have lived integrated lives—middle-class black kids—and they bring them to "Black Welcome Week" at Berkeley. They give their names to the black student associations, which recruit them and tell them to come and have pizza with "your brothers and sisters." They're pressured to join.... [If they] don't, they're viewed as Toms, they're viewed as wanting to be white. So they start down this path of ethnic studies, they live in this multicultural-center ghetto where their only friends are blacks and occasionally a Latino. Once in a while, they will get their own floor in the dorm, they get their own curricula, and when they graduate, they get their own separate graduation ceremonies based on their ethnic background. Then they join the Black Alumni Council and the Black Lawyers Association or, if they go into business, it's the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce or the Black Chamber of Commerce. We prepare them well for a life of separatism.

MILKING THE HOLOCAUST

According to recent press reports, the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims has managed to distribute only a paltry $3 million to Holocaust survivors since 1998. Meanwhile it spent ten times that much on administrative costs, including hotel bills and the $350,000 salary of chair-

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ROUGH JUSTICE

At 3 a.m. on May 18, a Chicago man tried to rape a 42-year-old woman. The woman bit off his testicles and delivered them to police a half hour later.

At 3:40 a.m., 21-year-old Erik Williams showed up in a hospital with injuries matching the woman's descriptions. Doctors were unable to reverse his castration.

The woman was treated at a hospital and released. Williams was charged with aggravated criminal sexual assault.

man Lawrence Eagleburger.

The folks at the ICHEIC have plenty of company. America drowns in a pious flood of Holocaust-themed museums, documentaries, books, plays, articles, TV movies, educational programs, and university departments. Each represents a livelihood for Holocaust professionals—usually individuals with no personal connection to the disaster who nonetheless benefit personally from stoking the flames of memory or retribution.

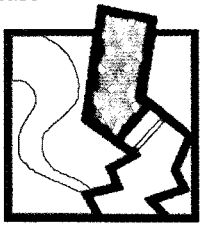
The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in D.C. alone annually consumes $34 million in government appropriations and $24 million in private funds. And don't forget the lawsuits, like the one demanding $40 billion from the U.S. government for neglecting to bomb the rail lines to Auschwitz (though America won that war and rescued the surviving Jews of Europe). Other suits stand to enrich a few lawyers by targeting corporations like General Motors and Chase Manhattan Bank for supposedly aiding the Nazis.

We Jews are inheritors of a religion that instructs us to "choose life" (see Deuteronomy 30:19). Yet many of our community leaders are constantly choosing to assail us with images of death, as if Judaism were some fatal cult. I wish the Holocaust was remembered as it should be, on Tisha B'Av, the day set aside to commemorate all Jewish tragedy since the destruction of the first Jerusalem temple. Then all the money spent on remembering Hitler could be devoted instead to something genuinely life-promoting, like teaching young Jews about Judaism.

—TAE *contributing writer* **Daniel Lapin** *is a rabbi and president of Toward Tradition.*

TOBACCO BONDS FOR SALE

The tobacco settlement hustle deepens. In 1998, 46 states, the District of Columbia, and numerous counties were awarded millions of dollars in future payments from tobacco companies, supposedly to cover future medical costs related to smoking. In practice, the greatest profit went to trial lawyers.



Now Wall Street is going to be dealt in. New York, D.C., Florida, Louisiana, and other states and counties are converting their 24-year revenue streams into lump sum payments—by selling future payments at a discount to bankers who are "securitizing" them into tobacco bonds they can peddle to investors. The governments in question will thus enjoy multi-million-dollar one-time bonanzas. That'll make current political officeholders happy. There'll be no long-term infusions for Medicaid budgets, though, as promised. But, hey, another whole universe of financiers, underwriters, brokerages, and investors will get a slice of that favorite delicacy—tobacco pie.

MODERNISTS AGAINST PROGRESS

Our great-grandparents, who lived in a far less affluent society, put up public buildings—courthouses, libraries, banks, schools—that spoke meaningfully to people of all ages. That's because they used the vocabularies, patterns, and rhythms of traditional architecture to inform everybody where their culture came from and what it represented.

Greco-Roman architecture in particular was used widely in nineteenth-century America in institutional buildings. The three-part divisions of Greco-Roman buildings expressed a "top, middle, and bottom," which are analogous of course to a head, body, and foot of the human figure. Greco-Roman architecture and all its emulations were therefore inherently humanistic. This is not a "style" issue. All classical architectures, across different cultures, share this characteristic. It represents human self-knowledge painfully acquired over centuries.

The late twentieth century brought a dreadful break in continuity for architectural design. We took centuries of hard-won design wisdom—a whole set of skills, principles, techniques, and attitudes about placemaking—and tossed them in the dumpster, replacing them with Modernist abstractions. We threw it all away in order to be stylish, to be cutting edge, to be "cool" Modernists. The irony is, Modernism has now collapsed into the abyss.

I show slides in my lectures of modern school buildings, for instance, that are so horrible they look like maximum security prisons. In their design they give the overt impression that school is punishment. It ought not be any surprise that learning does not occur in these environments. We ought to be deeply ashamed of such buildings.

A growing group of "New Traditionalist" reformers are trying to repair this architectural break by deliberately emulating time-tested layouts. The historical designs they are reviving work because they respect universals of human psychology, neurology, and spirit. But in a nation preoccupied with so-called "multiculturalism," reviving classical architecture is extremely difficult, because

EDUCRATS

The Education Intelligence Agency reports that:

- Classroom teachers now compose only 52 percent of the country's public education work force.
- In 12 states, non-teachers outnumber teachers.

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multiculturalists are allergic to any notion of hierarchy.

Similar battles are being played out in school classrooms themselves. Though many public schools are obviously failing, a consensus for reform is being blocked by powerful forces. These include the entrenched interests of the teachers' unions. We are also stuck in the trap of "previous investment": Having poured so many billions of dollars into huge, centralized school systems designed on the model of the shopping mall, we can't face the severity of the blunder we've made.

We need smaller, more numerous, more intimately scaled, and more spiritually rewarding schools. I don't think it matters whether they are public or private, or whether they are paid for via vouchers. School vouchers are just a tactical device to achieve reform in the face of severe intransigence.

Our grandparents would find it ludicrous that we cannot create decent schools. Teaching children to read, to add up a column of figures, and to understand something about where they came from and where they may be going is not such a difficult task. It is disgraceful that we've made it seem impossible.

—*Urban critic* **James Howard Kunstler's** *new book is entitled* The City in Mind.

INTERNAL RECREATION SERVICE

A recent audit by the Inspector General of the Internal Revenue Service examined how 16,000 IRS employees use their computers. It found that more than half of the time spent on line by IRS employees was for personal business.

Almost 23 percent of the connections were to Internet chat rooms, 20 percent were for trading stocks or looking up personal financial information, 7 percent were to go shopping on line, others were for downloading pornography, gambling, or chasing additional non-work-related rainbows.

Meanwhile, a different report from the Treasury Inspector General found that in the latest survey period, IRS employees charged with helping taxpayers at walk-in sites around the U.S. gave incorrect or insufficient answers 73 percent of the time. And to get even those answers one out of six of the inspectors had to wait from 30 minutes to over an hour. Phone callers to IRS helplines, meanwhile, currently get no answer 37 percent of the time. When there is a response, the answer is wrong in 47 percent of all cases.

THE TRANSPORTATION JALOPY

From its creation, the U.S. Department of Transportation has been an intellectual desert and a spending spigot. Few Americans realize that the federal highway program over which it presides is our largest aid program, dwarfing expenditures for things like education, housing, and medical research. And the department has many dark corners.

• *Cost-raising regulations.* The federal highway act is now an alluvial deposit of regulatory requirements which increase construction costs: Federal prevailing-wage laws, competitive bidding and bid-protest regulations, planning bureaucracies, and Buy American requirements prevent all but the largest, most bureaucratized contractors from competing. Efforts to compensate for these regulations' effects by having minority and small business set-asides just erect more barriers.

• *Mass transit boondoggles.* The department's mass transit subsidies favor inflexible rail systems, partly because contractors love their huge construction costs. Meanwhile, privatization of bus systems is made virtually impossible. Mandates require many city vehicles to be able to handle disabled riders, instead of allowing less costly, more demand-responsive van systems. No effort is made to persuade states and localities to abandon taxicab licensing systems that discourage cab competition and service in low-income neighborhoods.

• *Perverse incentives.* Since the department requires only a 20 percent matching contribution for most transportation projects, any federally aided highway project is a windfall for the state sponsoring it, and expensive local projects of marginal value are encouraged.

• *Regressive taxing and spending.* The gasoline tax the department oversees is a regressive levy that hits low-income Americans hardest. And its highway aid goes mostly to boomtowns, skipping depressed cities, declining inner suburbs, and other economically needy areas of the country.

• *Land wastage.* Official highway construction standards frequently impose excessive requirements that squander land and add cost. Little is done to calm traffic in residential areas or close unneeded streets in large cities.

In sum, most of the Department of Transportation's programs are driven by the interests of providers, not consumers. They skew local choices, shuffle large amounts of money about in irrational ways, and provide a classic warning of what happens when large amounts of public funds are distributed out of public view. A lack of interest among journalists has abetted these scandalous misallocations.

The cure is obvious: a federal credit for gasoline taxes that would return most transportation revenues—and associated responsibilities—to the states. Proposals of this sort were energetically pressed by former Representative John Kasich (R-OH) with inadequate support from party leaders. The Department of Transportation should be transformed into a research and information bureau. Like the sinners in the Book of Common Prayer, the DoT "does those things it ought not to do, and does not do those things it ought to do, and there is no health in it."

—**George Liebmann** *is a* TAE *contributing writer.*

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Forward Observer

James Glassman

A Free-Market Reform of Campaign Finance

Threatened by the worst economic slowdown in a decade, the Senate acted with uncommon dispatch as the new session began. Clearing the decks, it immediately got down to the urgent business at hand, and, on April 2, passed...a campaign finance reform bill?

Whether the House and the Supreme Court will approve the measure are matters still in doubt, but the McCain-Feingold bill has come much farther than anyone expected a year ago, and it stands a good chance of becoming the most sweeping campaign finance reform law since Watergate.

When considering the justifications for the need for reform—that candidates who raise a lot of money have an unfair advantage, and that campaign donations will influence legislative votes—one has to ask, how are we to tell whether an abundance of campaign donations is not simply a sign of a candidate's success in terms of his performance and positions, and how do we know how a member of Congress would have voted *absent* campaign donations?

John Lott of Yale and Steven Bronars of the University of Texas address the second issue in an elegantly designed paper in the *Journal of Law and Economics*, examining "whether contributions alter how the politician votes or whether these contributions constitute support for like-minded individuals." They looked at the voting behavior of retiring members of Congress in their last year in office. Since these members were not campaigning, they could not be "selling" their votes for donations.

If the influence argument is true, "there should be systematic changes in voting behavior when future contributions are eliminated," wrote Lott and Bronars. In fact, they found no such changes, indicating that the money supports views rather than buying votes.

But reformers aren't interested in facts like these. They prefer to draw conclusions from the correlations: "Big tobacco," "big oil," etc., not only purchase votes, they drive sickened voters from the polls. Thus, McCain-Feingold.

Many conservatives think they have an antidote: immediate disclosure of campaign contributions. There's no need to change the law, they say; instead, simply tell voters who is giving to whom (and how much), and let the voters use this information to make their decisions.

Voters are served well when they know from whom candidates receive their funding, and the uses to which that money is put. But government-mandated disclosure is undesirable, for several reasons. First, candidates will likely reveal no more than is absolutely required; second, a rule tends to be static, setting limits that are fixed by the technology and state of thinking at the time it is enacted; and, third, government-mandated disclosure constrains the liberties of both donors and candidates.

I believe a better solution would be a free-market model for disclosure. Under this competitive model, a candidate who discloses more information should get more votes, if that's what voters want. A candidate who refuses to disclose donations would be punished at the polls.

How would a free market in disclosure work? Organizations would develop as independent auditors to provide disclosure of donor and expenditure activity, almost certainly on websites, in an instantaneous fashion. Each disclosure agent (one might be a creation of the League of Women Voters, another of an accounting firm or a political website) would place a "seal of approval" on data released by candidates. The agents would compete to acquire the best reputation for speed and accuracy while the candidates (as well as party organizations) would be drawn to the agent with the best reputation.

Some candidates may want a lower level of disclosure. For example, an employee who contributes to a liberal candidate may not want that fact known to his conservative employer. A candidate might provide anonymity to that individual, and the disclosure agency could report that, for this candidate, $1 million in donations (with names of donors) was disclosed but $100,000 in donations came from undisclosed sources.

This lack of disclosure would clearly raise questions, but it is an option that candidates should have. They should also have the option of complete non-disclosure—though both candidates and donors would have to abide by donation limits, if any. Such information would be analogous to tax returns, kept confidential by the Internal Revenue Service but subject to subpoena if authorities suspect legal violations.

A free-market, competitive disclosure model would work in an environment of strict limits on campaign expenditures, as in McCain-Feingold, or in an environment of no limits at all. Its premise is simply that voters want to know as much as possible about candidates—not only their views but the sources of their funding. The only question is how this information is disseminated. I suggest that, as in computer chips or fried chicken, a competitive market will produce the best results.

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"Live with TAE

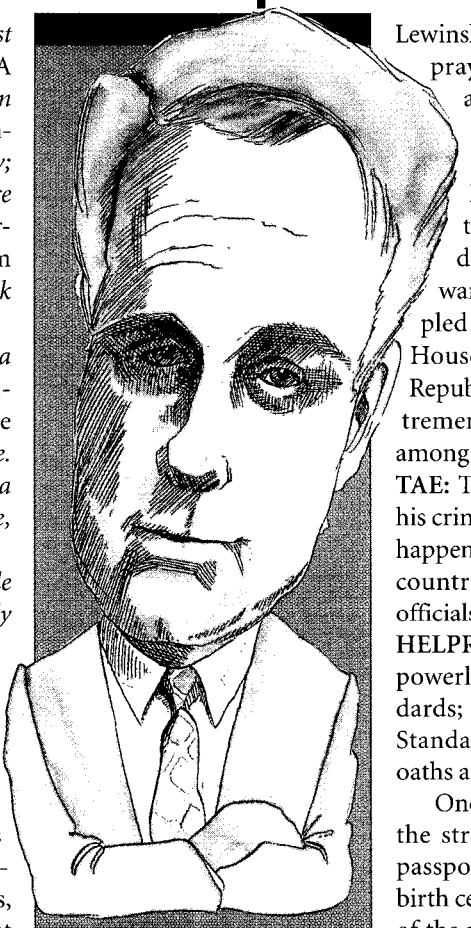
One of America's most interesting novelists is also a conservative—and a crafter of powerful political rhetoric and commentary.

Mark Helprin

Novelist Mark Helprin, 54, is one of the brightest lights in American letters. His fiction includes A Soldier of the Great War, *the story of an old man who imparts his life's wisdom to a young boy;* Winter's Tale, *a fairy-tale about New York City;* Refiner's Fire, *a semi-autobiographical adventure about a young man serving in the Israeli Army during the Yom Kippur War; and* Memoir From Antproof Case, *about an investment banker/bank robber from the World War II generation.*

In 1996, Helprin made his public debut as a political speechwriter, crafting Presidential candidate Bob Dole's Republican Convention cri de coeur *and powerful resignation from the Senate. I will run for President as "a private citizen, a Kansan, an American, just a man," said Dole, via Helprin.*

In recent years, Helprin has been most visible as a writer of political commentary, particularly for the Wall Street Journal *editorial page. But he has just returned to novel writing.* TAE *associate editor John Meroney interviewed Helprin on his farm in rural Virginia.*



I've come to believe that the best place to meet a woman is in an emergency: earthquakes, fires, sinking ships.

TAE: In October 1997, three months before Bill Clinton's affair with Monica Lewinsky was made public, you were calling for his impeachment in the *Wall Street Journal.* But the fact is, President Clinton left office with the highest approval rating of practically any president in history.

HELPRIN: And during impeachment it was much higher.

TAE: So what happened?

HELPRIN: I believe that had Trent Lott and the other Republican leaders decided to pursue the impeachment case without prejudice—to have had a real trial and actually go where facts led them—Bill Clinton would have been convicted. Perjury, obstruction of justice, destroying evidence—that's sufficient for impeachment. But the heart of the matter was that he took campaign contributions from Communist China and transferred secret technology in return. The Lewinsky fight was the answer to the President's prayers, because she sidetracked attention away from other issues.

TAE: So do you blame the Senate Republicans?

HELPRIN: Perhaps it was a matter of temperament, and Lott and the others didn't want to rock the boat. They didn't want the political risk involved in a principled stand. Plus, remember that the White House had six hundred raw FBI files on Republicans. My guess is that this material had tremendous value in damping volubility among the opposition.

TAE: The public punished Richard Nixon for his crimes but excused Bill Clinton for his. What happened between 1974 and 1999 to change the country's expectations of propriety in public officials?

HELPRIN: Millions of little things. People feel powerless to stand up against eroding standards; we let them pass, and don't speak out. Standards about propriety, truth-telling, and oaths are changing.

Once, when I was in Israel, I was robbed on the street of everything I had, including my passport. Like a fool, I was also carrying my birth certificate and they stole that, too. In terms of the modern twentieth century identity, I was stripped naked. I went to the American Embassy for help and told them I needed a new passport because without it I couldn't get any money wired to me and would have to live on the street for two weeks. The people at the embassy said they could issue one if I were able to get another American I knew to swear to my citizenship. The problem was, I didn't know any Americans over there at all.

I went out in the waiting room and there was another American, like me. I knew he was an American, he knew I was an American, just from the way we talked. So he said, "Let's just tell them we've known each other for five years. You're obviously an American, and you know I

Illustration by Lucinda S. Levine

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am, so what's the harm?" And I said, "It's that we have to swear to the Constitution with our hands on a Bible and in front of the American flag—*it's our word.*" And he said, "Well, so what? It's true, isn't it? We're both Americans." I said, "We'd be lying under oath, and you can't do that." I lived on the street for two weeks.

TAE: Are you certain that wasn't a young Bill Clinton you encountered?

HELPRIN: The fact that Clinton got away with impeachment put the imprimatur of the whole society on his kind of behavior. I just read recently that 70 percent of high school students regularly cheat, and don't understand that it's wrong.

TAE: Do you ever think about running for politics yourself these days?

HELPRIN: One has to do a lot of socializing in politics. I have tremendous trouble dealing with social situations such as cocktail parties, so-called "coffees," and dinners. Also, I'm not good at remembering people's names if I meet someone in a group—again, not a plus for a politician. I also like tranquility.

TAE: So you're not suited for politicking. Is writing political commentary your substitute?

HELPRIN: I suppose. There's appointive office, and had Bob Dole won the presidency in 1996, I must say I was expecting to get the Embassy in Wallis and Futuna. (laughs) My wife, though, told me I'd get cufflinks. (laughs)

TAE: Do you think we're losing some unique qualities in America by all watching the same television, shopping in the same stores, eating in the same restaurants, no matter where we live?

HELPRIN: In 1961, when I was fourteen, I was on a cross-country bicycle trip and pulled into a roadside store in probably the tiniest town in Oklahoma. I asked the guy who worked there if I could use the telephone. It wasn't a pay phone so I offered to give him the money for making a long distance call. He asked where I was calling, and I told him New York. He looked at me really funny and said he'd never heard of New York. Now, maybe he was joking, but I don't think so.

TAE: The country seemed a lot bigger back then.

HELPRIN: Yes, and each region had its own unique cuisine and products. Once, when I was in San Francisco, I walked into a store and asked to buy a soda and the owner wanted me to explain to him what that was. In San Francisco then, they called it a phosphate. In Boston, they called it a tonic, but pronounced it *tawhnic.* When I lived in Seattle, they called an ambulance an aid car.

When you're in a political fight, you're not thinking of love. But your ferocity is linked to love. I'm protecting what I love and fighting for what's right.

It's ironic that the diversity fad has happened just at the moment when there's more homogenization than at any other time in history. So maybe the diversity movement is a yearning for a golden age when places and immigrant groups really were different. The child of a Vietnamese boat person becomes a universal American in about eight years. When I was growing up as a Jew in New York, I wasn't the same as a Methodist from Arizona, or a Lutheran from Minnesota. Maybe diversity is about salvaging something younger generations never really had. Being homogenized sure makes the infinite spaces we once had seem a lot smaller.

TAE: One common theme in your novels is love and romance. Has today's culture distorted a young person's appreciation for such things?

HELPRIN: It's blown everything apart, like a hand grenade. The structure on which romance is built has been attacked and destroyed, on the grounds that it's inequitable to women. Feminists argue that traditional romance is oppressive and antiquated. Chivalry, tenderness, and frothy romance are all frowned upon, even outlawed. In their place is another structure that's totally politicized.

TAE: Where do people turn to be inspired about love?

HELPRIN: Unfortunately, young people's introduction to this has been almost exclusively from the point-of-view of Los Angeles pornographers. Their introduction to sex has been with the raunchiest and grossest stuff. Only after they've been exposed to that are they supposed to date and go to a dance. Not only have things been coarsened, but the order has been reversed. Look, my first exposure to sex was when I had it. (laughs)

TAE: The popular culture certainly doesn't celebrate your experience.

HELPRIN: It sure doesn't. My daughters and I were recently listening to music. They like me to play them the antiquated things called records. They'll ask, "How do you make it so the needle goes in the right cut?" I was playing them some beautiful songs from a Broadway musical, wonderful romantic stuff. And I realized that their generation is programmed to have contempt for it because it's too soft, gushy, and dorky.

TAE: So what advice would you give single people about romance?

HELPRIN: Well, I've come to believe that the best place to meet a woman is in an emergency: earthquakes, fires, sinking ships, and attacks by enemy armies.

TAE: Just because you don't like cocktail parties?

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HELPRIN: No, because in struggle people form the deepest bonds. That's what happens with men in combat. And when it happens between a man and a woman, it couldn't be better.

TAE: Which begs the question: How did you meet Mrs. Helprin?

HELPRIN: The first time I saw her she had a butcher knife in her hand, ready to kill me.

TAE: That qualifies.

HELPRIN: The story is actually a bit more complicated than that. Lisa, my wife, has some Jewish ancestry and was planning on marrying a Lubavitcher, which is strange considering that her father is named Eugene Patrick Kennedy. Her husband-to-be went to the famous Rabbi Schneerson for advice, who told him that because of technicalities in Jewish law, the marriage wouldn't be right, and that he'd have to choose between his Judaism and Lisa. Thankfully for me, he opted for the former, and as a farewell gift, gave her a copy of my first book, *A Dove of the East.* She read it and wanted to read my next one, so she ordered it from Scribner's bookstore.

TAE: So you married a fan.

HELPRIN: Well, here's where it gets interesting. Shortly after that, I also crossed paths with Rabbi Schneerson at a festival called *Simhat-Torah*. There were several thousand Orthodox Jews dancing and singing at this event, and when the Rabbi arrived, the entire hall opened up like the Red Sea. He walked down the aisle, stopped right where I was, and summoned me. I walked up to him, he put his hand on my shoulder and just looked me in the eye. Then he moved on. All the people around me then picked me up, put me on their shoulders and carried me, saying, "It's a great honor, you've been chosen." Chosen for what, I wondered. Just two days before, I'd also ordered a book from Scribner's about petroleum geology, and the store put it next to the novel of mine that Lisa had ordered called *Refiner's Fire* because the clerk thought both were about the same topic. When I went in to purchase mine, I saw that hers was right next to it, and so just out of curiosity I wanted to see who had ordered it. It turns out that this Lisa Kennedy lived two buildings down from me on Riverside Drive.

TAE: And the butcher knife?

HELPRIN: I went to her apartment, rang the bell, and said, "It's Mark Helprin." At that moment, she was reading *Refiner's Fire* and thought someone had been looking in her window with a telescope, stalking her. So that's why she came downstairs with a butcher knife. But first thing she said to me was, "It *is* you," because she recognized me from the dust jacket. The second I looked at her, I knew I'd marry her. She says the same thing. That was 23 years ago.

TAE: So what do you make of that?

HELPRIN: I'm reluctant to attribute any kind of divine powers to a living human being, even if it is a famous rabbi. But if that's a coincidence, it's one hell of a coincidence.

TAE: Many people would probably be surprised to know that the same man who writes political commentary for the *Wall Street Journal* cites as his motto a line from Dante's *Inferno* that translates "Love moved me, and makes me speak."

HELPRIN: It makes sense to me, because I'm very concerned about the world that will be left to my children. I attack enemies, but only to preserve what I think needs preserving. That's what moves me. When you're in the fight, you're not thinking of love. But your ferocity is linked to love. I'm protecting what I love and fighting for what's right. It isn't right to simply let things go and only look out for yourself.

TAE: Do liberals tell you that you sold out?

HELPRIN: Of course. They tell me they think I sold out to "corporations," or "the powers that be." They tell me all kinds of things. People walk up to me at book events and say things such as, "I can't believe you're a conservative." Or, "You're smart. How can you be a Republican?"

But considering that the audience for my fiction is mainly liberal Democrats, I hardly sold out. What I did was to cut my own throat.

TAE: I get a sense that you enjoy writing fiction more than editorials.

HELPRIN: Absolutely. For me, writing non-fiction is torture.

TAE: Have you suffered in artistic circles because of your editorials?

HELPRIN: I was called a fascist in *Vanity Fair*—and I suppose you can't put into print the way I said the words "vanity fair." When I began writing articles about impeaching Bill Clinton, a person who claimed to be me appeared on the scene. He would call publishers, agents, and other people in the literary world and make lunch appointments with them, in my name, and then not show up. He also ran personal ads in magazines suggesting that he was me, and when women would contact him, he'd identify himself as me. After making a phone relationship, he'd call late at night to scream obscenities. One of the women wrote to me at my publisher, telling me how awful she thought I was, so I called her and we figured out what had happened. He did it to a lot of people, but I never

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found out who he was.

TAE: Having served in the Israeli Army, and written about the U.S. military, what's your view about women in the armed forces?

HELPRIN: People have a mistaken view of the Israeli Army. Feminists in Israel are trying to make the army into a copy of ours. Women fought in the Israeli War of Independence, but it was because there was such a shortage of manpower, and women didn't fight as much as the myth-makers would have you believe. I served in a security unit that protected a base on the Lebanese border filled with female radar operators, and I never saw any of them touch a gun. They were very feminine. My commander-in-chief was Golda Meir, and I was happy to serve under her. She was more of a man than Bill Clinton will ever be.

I'm not against women in the military, but I am against women in combat. Period. They *can* fight, although generally not as well as men. Mainly I'm against it because it's a question of what kind of country we want to be. Any country that sends its mothers and daughters to war is a sick country. But politicians are afraid to say this because women vote, and the politicians cater to their narcissism, which now includes the idea that they should be able to lead a ranger recon squad. They'll be of that opinion until there's a really rough war where they get sent home in large numbers in body bags. Then they'll change their minds, as they should.

TAE: Who in today's political culture is emerging as a statesman?

HELPRIN: Among the leaders in politics today, we don't seem to have a Winston Churchill. Some thought John McCain was going to be like that, but the difference was instructive. When Churchill matured into his greatness, he was cast into the wilderness. When McCain matured out of his greatness, he moved to center stage. When I see a Winston Churchill, I'll let you know.

TAE: What about Bush?

HELPRIN: The younger?

TAE: Yes.

HELPRIN: Well, I like him, but, look, you can't engage the enemy unless you're willing to bring your ships next to his, can you? If he doesn't respond to the Democrats' confrontations he will be perceived as weak and, worse, not having beliefs worth either passion or a fight.

TAE: In this last presidential campaign, the *New York Times* itself became an issue, not only because of Bush's off-the-record comment about reporter Adam Clymer, but because certain of their news stories read like editorials. Do you think the *Times* should be the main standard for what's news in the country?

HELPRIN: Well, even though I'm a native New Yorker, I don't read it anymore. I just don't think of it as authoritative. The *Times* once was very careful not to editorialize. They practiced good journalism in those days. Now, the *Washington Post* is much fairer.

TAE: In your novel *A Soldier of the Great War,* the character Alessandro Giuliani is a student of art and science, he's also a soldier, a prisoner, and many other things throughout his life. Is living that kind of grand heroic life still possible in the twenty-first century?

HELPRIN: It's becoming increasingly difficult. People seem to have less time than ever before. And so much of life is now just noise. I consider answering machines, portable phones, and computers—things like that, to be a sickness.

TAE: Do you use a computer?

HELPRIN: Yes, but not e-mail. Computers ought to be used for such things as medical imagery, national defense, scientific research, record keeping, and word processing. But when they're made into entertainment vehicles, it's too much. Multimedia has become a mechanical crutch for our imaginations.

People are becoming mechanisms. Some rhapsodize about bionic people and genetic engineering, and computer scientists say we'll be immortal when our memory banks are put into computers. If that were the case, then the Library of Congress would be a person. But it isn't, because it doesn't have a soul. The soul can't reside in a machine. The utilitarians who suggest that can believe so because they believe we're machines. We aren't.

TAE: It's hard to go anywhere now without hearing cell phones ringing next to you.

HELPRIN: People are terrified that they're going to miss any opportunity. Well, they're going to miss a big one. If you read 400 e-mail messages and are constantly checking your portable fax and looking at your Dick Tracy watch, you lose the real opportunity: knowing what it's like to be alive.

Young people's introduction to sex has been almost exclusively from the point of view of Los Angeles pornographers. Only after they've been exposed to that are they supposed to date and go to a dance.

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"Aaron" by Thomas Hart Benton depicts an 82-year-old man from Independence, Missouri who had been born a slave.

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Blood Money

Why I don't want reparations for slavery

By John McWhorter

My childhood was a typical one for a black American in his mid-thirties. I grew up middle class in a quiet, safe neighborhood in Philadelphia. I still miss living at the top of the tidy little cul-de-sac known as Marion Lane, and to this day there are few things more soothing to me than a walk through Carpenter's Woods across the street.

I didn't grow up in a segregated world. My parents didn't live "just enough for the city," as the old Stevie Wonder song goes; my mother taught social work at Temple University and my father was a student activities administrator there. My parents were far from wealthy, living at the edge of their credit cards like many middle class people. But I had everything I needed plus some extras, and spent more time in one of our two cars than on buses.

Contrary to popular belief, I was by no means extraordinarily "lucky" or "unusual" among black Americans of the post-Civil Rights era. There was a time when the childhood I've just described was the province of a tiny "black bourgeoisie." (In 1940, for example, only one in a hundred black families had a middle class income.) But today, there are legions of black adults in the United States who grew up as I did. As a child, I never had trouble finding black peers, and as an adult, meeting black people with life histories like mine requires no searching. In short, in our moment, black success is a norm. Less than one in four black families now live below the poverty line, and the black underclass is at most one out of five blacks. This is what the Civil Rights revolution helped make possible, and I grew up exhilarated at belonging to a race that had made such progress in the face of many obstacles.

Yet today, numerous black officials tell the public that lives like mine are statistical noise, that the overriding situation for blacks is one of penury, dismissal, and spiritual desperation. Under this analysis, the blood of slavery remains on the hands of mainstream America until it allocates a large sum of money

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to "repair" the unsurmounted damage done to our race over four centuries.

The ideological impulses infecting black America since the mid-1960s make a "reparations" movement not just logical but almost predictable. Yet the notion is a distraction from the real work we have to do.

The shorthand version of the reparations idea is that living blacks are "owed" the money that our slave ancestors were denied for their unpaid servitude. But few black Americans even know the names or life stories of their slave ancestors; almost none of us have pictures or keepsakes from that far back. I am relatively unique even in happening to know my most recent slave ancestor's name—it was also John Hamilton McWhorter. Yes, my slave ancestors were "blood" to me; yes, what was done to them was unthinkable. But the 150 years between me and them has rendered our tie little more than biological. Paying anyone for the suffering of long-dead strangers, even if technically relatives, would be more a matter of blood money than "reparation."

Quite simply, for me to reap a windfall from the first John Hamilton McWhorter's suffering would be a trivialization of his existence. He spent a life in unpaid and permanent servitude; I get paid because every now and then I get trailed by a salesclerk? Or even stopped on a drug check by a policeman? That would dishonor my ancestors' suffering.

Perhaps recognizing this, the reparations movement is now drifting away from the "back salary" argument to justifications emphasizing the effects of slavery since Emancipation. It is said blacks deserve payment for residual echoes of their earlier disenfranchisement and segregation. This justification, however, is predicated upon the misconception that in 2001, most blacks are "struggling."

This view denies the stunning success that the race has achieved over the past 40 years. It persists because many Americans, black and white, have accepted the leftist notion which arose in the mid-1960s that blacks are primarily victims in this country, that racism and structural injustice hobble all but a few individual blacks. Based on emotion, victimologist thought ignores the facts of contemporary black success and progress, because they do not square with the "blame game."

The depictions of modern black America by reparations advocates—like Randall Robinson, author of *The Debt: What America Owes to Blacks*, who sees nothing but tragedy, scorn, and neglect for blacks in America—often sound even bleaker than analyses by black intellectuals at the turn of the century, when most blacks were still mired in poverty in the South. W.E.B. Du Bois noted back in 1912 that blacks "have in a generation changed from a slave to a free labor system, reestablished family life, accumulated $1,000,000,000 [in] property, including 20,000,000 acres of land, and reduced their illiteracy from 80 to 30 percent."

One would never hear a modern "civil rights leader" make such a statement today, because it highlights black success rather than failure. This is a serious mistake. No valid appeal for reparations can be based on an inaccurate stereotype that "black" means "poor"—especially when the very people calling for reparations are so quick to decry this stereotype as racist when whites appeal to it.

Reparations cannot logically rely on a depiction of black Americans as a race still reeling from the brutal experience of slavery and its aftereffects. The reality is that, by any estimation, in the year 2001 *there are more middle class blacks than poor ones*. The large majority of black Americans, while surely not immune to the slings and arrows of the eternal injustices of life on earth, are now leading dignified lives as new variations on what it means to be American.

An argument for reparations that acknowledged the success and basic strength of black America today would aim squarely at the quarter or so of all blacks who are struggling, especially those in the inner cities. Even here, however, we must be careful about what "reparations" would be intended to do. If all black Americans living below the poverty line were given a subsidy to move to the suburbs, free tuition for college, and/or a small business loan, all indications are that it would make no difference in the overall condition of most of their lives in the long run. As the pitfalls of Section 8 programs in various cities have shown, a house in the suburbs cannot undo deeply ingrained cultural patterns etched by racism of the past but today self-generating.

Money to attend college is of little use in a culture that has inherited from the Black Power movement a tendency to equate scholarly commitment (beyond black-related topics) with "acting white." This pulls down the performance of even many middle class black students. The less privileged ones too often just drop out entirely.

The person who obtains a small business loan on his own can't help but have a deeper commitment to its success than the person who is simply handed a check from on high with no questions asked. This has been painfully clear from the checkered and often corrupt record of minority businesses that owe their existence to contracts meted out according to racial preferences.

The reality is that the only way for any group of human beings to succeed is through individual initiative. This may not be fair for a group with a history of oppression, but history records no other pathway to the top. In the mid-1960s, America experimented with the idea, a reasonable guess on its face, that simply giving handouts to poor blacks would enable them to

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A reparations movement predicated upon the fiction that handouts will raise large numbers of black people out of poverty would actually work against true and lasting uplift.

bypass the conventional route to self-realization. But today the data are in: a three-generations-deep welfare culture where work was an option rather than a given, where a passive and victimhood-based relationship to mainstream accomplishment was endemic. There is nothing "black" about this, given that similar policies have left an equally bleak situation in Native American communities, as well as white ones in Appalachia.

A "reparations" movement predicated upon the fiction that *more* brute handouts will raise large numbers of black people out of poverty would actually work against true and lasting uplift, leaving life nasty, brutish, and short for millions of black people. As the old adage goes—one which many blacks would spontaneously applaud—"Give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day, teach a man to fish and he'll eat forever."

Any effort to repair problems in black America must focus on helping people to help themselves. Funds must be devoted to ushering welfare mothers into working for a living, so that their children do not grow up learning that employment is something "other people" do. Inner city communities should be helped to rebuild themselves, in part through making it easier for residents to buy their homes. Police forces ought to be trained to avoid brutality, which turns young blacks against the mainstream today, and to work with, rather than against, the communities they serve.

Finally, this country must support all possible efforts to liberate black children from the soul-extinguishing influence of ossified urban public schools, and to move them into experimental or all-minority schools where a culture of competition is fostered. This will help undo the sense that intellectual excellence is a "white" endeavor. Surely we must improve the public schools as well, including increasing the exposure of young black children to standardized tests. But we also must make sure another generation of black children are not lost during the years it will take for these schools to get their acts together.

Most readers will have noticed that all of the things I just described are in fact taking place. George W. Bush's Faith-Based and Community Initiatives effort is a long-overdue attempt to bring black churches into play in helping make inner-city neighborhoods stable communities. Meanwhile, community development corporations are slowly working quiet wonders in such neighborhoods by granting inner-city people loans with which to purchase real estate. The Community Reinvestment Act concurrently spurs banks to make small business loans to minorities.

Numerous cities are demonstrating that cooperation between police forces and minority communities can lead to massive drops in crime. And the Bush administration is pressing to move minority children into functioning schools, while advocating increased testing of all students (though the Democrats' coddling of teachers' unions in return for votes presents a mighty obstacle).

In other words, it could be argued that America is already in the business of "reparations" for blacks, teaching us to fish instead of just giving us a dinner wrapped in newspaper.

Furthermore, there have already been what any outside observer would term "reparations" since the 1960s. When reparations fans grouse that "It's time America acknowledged slavery," one wonders just what they thought the "War on Poverty" was. In the 1930s, welfare policies were primarily intended for widows. In the mid-1960s, welfare programs were deliberately expanded for the "benefit" of black people.

Federal and state governments have since poured billions of dollars into welfare payments and the imposing bureaucracy that grew up along with them. This very bureaucracy has gone on to provide secure government jobs for several million blacks. The byzantine industry of urban social service agencies familiar to us today did not exist before the late 1960s.

None of this was specifically termed "reparations," but it certainly provided unearned cash for underclass blacks for decades, as well as sinecure jobs for a great many others. Today, welfare programs are thankfully being recast as temporary stopgaps, with welfare mothers being trained for work. The funds and efforts devoted to this laudable effort are again a concrete attempt to overcome structural poverty. A society with no commitment to addressing the injustices of the past wouldn't bother with any of this effort aimed at poor blacks.

Affirmative action policies were similarly developed to acknowledge earlier slights. Initially intended as a call to recruit qualified blacks for hiring or school admission, the policy quickly transmogrified into quota systems, with lesser qualified blacks all too often being given positions over better qualified whites. Even most blacks under about age 45 tend to tacitly think of affirmative action as a "reparation," although they would not put it in just that way.

Despite the Herculean efforts we have seen over the past few decades, the sentiment persists among certain blacks that America somehow "owes" us still. These reparations advocates are at heart motivated by a broken self-image, a deep-seated insecurity about being black. This renders cries of victimhood imperative, because they are internally soothing. Black success is "beside the point" until all whites avidly "like" us. This is what blinds reparations advocates to the fact that most whites—especially educated and influential ones—long ago heard the message. It was Peter Edelman who resigned from the Clinton administration's Department of Health and Human Services over the reform of the welfare laws, and white former university presidents William Bowen and Derek Bok who

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America is already in the business of making "reparations" to blacks.

penned the most prominent book-length defense of affirmative action, *The Shape of the River.*

Because the reparations movement is ultimately based on an inferiority complex rather than empirical engagement, the only "reparations" acceptable to its advocates would have to be officially titled as such, granted by a white America explicitly designating itself as the agent of all black misery past and present.

The problem is that no aid package could possibly have any substantial or lasting effect on black America unless it is designed to elicit self-generated initiative. *And such packages are already in operation*, though not titled as "reparations." Teaching disadvantaged blacks how to fish is exactly what the reform of welfare, the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, the community development corporations, the Community Reinvestment Act, the school voucher movement, and even the gradual rollback of racial preferences are all designed to do. A package of new handouts and set-asides, tied in a ribbon as a sop to black leaders' addiction to the giveaways of condescending white leftists, would not only have no serious benefit, it would do outright harm.

There would be damage on both sides of the racial divide. As the magic transformations of the package inevitably failed to appear, the flop would be attributed to there not having been enough money granted. Next a new mantra would become established in the black community to cover the bitter disappointment: "They think they can treat us like animals for four hundred years and then just pay us off?" Meanwhile, non-blacks would begin to grouse "They got reparations—what are they still complaining about?" Whether these mutterings would be valid is beside the point, what matters is that they would arise and be passed on to a new generation, to further poison interracial relations in this country.

Ultimately, a race shows its worth not by how much charity it can extract from others, but in how well it can do in the absence of charity. Black America has elicited more charity from its former oppressors than any race in human history—justifiably in my view. However, this can only serve as a spark—the real work is now ours.

The only reparations I could live with are the substantial ones already in effect, which show all signs of making a difference to the minority of blacks left behind during the explosion of the black middle class. There are certainly some additional steps that could be taken to improve the chances of the black underclass: increased child-care centers to make it easier for inner-city mothers to work; better transportation from cities to suburbs to make it easier to get to places of employment; more research on and funding for drug rehabilitation. There would be no harm in labeling a package of policies of this sort "reparations."

But in the end, most reparations activists would see this as "not enough." The reforms I've described are designed for the mundane business of concrete and measurable uplift. What most reparations advocates are seeking, on the other hand, is an emotional balm: a comprehensive *mea culpa* by white America of responsibility for everything that ails any blacks.

This version of "civil rights," however, is a mere excrescence of our moment—a competition for eliciting pity, which pre-1960s civil-rights leaders would barely recognize. And it will pass.

A Bean Counting Nightmare to Avoid

By Deroy Murdock

How big a reparations check should Tiger Woods get?

Applauded as one of America's most prominent black athletes, the champion golfer actually is only part black. He coined the word "Cablinasian" to reflect his Caucasian, black, American Indian, and Thai heritage.

As someone who is 25 percent black, Woods arguably deserves—at most—one quarter of any sum Washington might deem sufficient to compensate a typical black American for the allegedly lingering effects of slavery.

Woods's black blood clearly has not held him back. He has won $24 million in career prize money—a record—plus over $100 million in endorsements. He is internationally adored as a gracious sportsman and model son. Tiger Woods is a celebrity without detractors. And he's only 24.

Who should pay Woods whatever reparations fee might be appropriate? Should the descendants of former slaveholders send him money? They cannot be held responsible for a brutal, immoral institution that went kaput 138 years ago. And how would they even be identified? Some intermarried with Yankees—white and otherwise. Does this get them off the

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hook, even a little?

It would be even more pernicious to force the progeny of Union soldiers to hand Tiger Woods anything. Many of these Americans lost their great-great-great-grandfathers and other relatives from Shiloh to Gettysburg in the North's struggle to defeat the South and end slavery. It is unthinkable to expect such families to pay anything atop their forebears' ultimate sacrifice.

How about paying reparations out of general tax revenues? This also is unjust. Government reparations checks would send Tiger Woods the tax money of Holocaust survivors who came to America in the 1940s, Vietnamese boat people who arrived in the 1970s, and Russians who fled the Soviet Union for the USA in the 1980s.

In short, there is no moral or economic theory on which one could calculate how much or from whom Tiger Woods should collect reparations.

Leaving Woods aside, several broad facts will derail the reparations project before it can leave the station. One is that immigration and intermarriage are turning America multiracial. The U.S. Census Bureau now recognizes 126 different categories of race and ethnicity, many of which blend black roots with other heritages. Under such circumstances, only microsurgeons could distribute justice in the twenty-first century for a nineteenth-century crime.

Already—without the incentive of national outlays payable according to skin tone—governmental racial accounting is fraught with outrages. For instance, while mixed-race Americans were free in the 2000 census to check off, say, the boxes for black and white, the federal tabulators chose to ignore the white designation. As a Clinton administration bulletin declared: "Responses that combine one minority race and white are allocated to the minority race."

By cynically and artificially assigning citizens of mixed-race backgrounds solely to minority categories, bureaucrats magically can inflate the apparent number of blacks and others in a given locale. This already supplies federal, state, and local officials with abundant raw materials for mischief in areas ranging from redistricting to minority business set-asides to college admissions. That's how Jon McGrath, a fair-skinned, blue-eyed railroad builder who is 1/64 Cherokee, got $19 million in minority subcontracts from the Los Angeles rapid transit system.

Government allocations of slavery reparations would make such treachery even more common. The alternative to this squalid public policy is simple: the separation of race and state. Government simply should stop counting, and addressing, Americans by race. Reparations, however, would transport America swiftly in the opposite direction.

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If it's wrong for a cop to eye a black man and consider him a criminal, it is equally wrong for a Treasury official to see that same black man and regard him as deserving of a check.

If it is wrong for a cop to eye a black man and consider him a criminal, it is equally wrong for Treasury official to see that same black man and regard him as disadvantaged and deserving of a check. Reparations would be just another political act of racial profiling. We're all Americans; a just government simply would count on that.

Another reason reparations are illogical and impractical is that millions of blacks already have ascended into the middle class—and beyond. The 2000 Census reports that many blacks who moved on up in the 1980s moved on out in the 1990s, migrating to America's suburbs. Thus it would be unfair, for instance, for citizens who cannot qualify for American Express cards to subsidize Kenneth Chenault, the black CEO of American Express.

If reparations were targeted to poorer blacks rather than offered to blacks universally, the issue would change from slavery's injustices and repercussions to mere poverty relief. Numerous government programs already exist to support those with low incomes. Moreover, a reparations program that only benefits poor blacks essentially would dismiss the pain of the ancestors of today's successful blacks.

Add to these circumstances the fact that many black Americans (including my parents) arrived in the U.S. from the Caribbean or Latin America long after slavery ended. The families of Colin Powell, Sidney Poitier, and Patrick Ewing were not victims of Southern slavery. What injustice would paying them address?

There are, of course, many blacks who have been left behind in terms of incomes and opportunities. But there is a much better long-term strategy to improve their lot than to tear open ancient shackle scars. The American Left must end its reactionary opposition to school choice. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, 63 percent of black fourth graders cannot read. This is a national emergency, yet so-called "black leaders" will not dial 911.

Vouchers, charter schools, rising standards, and a love of learning will build a much firmer foundation for black achievement than will a protracted struggle to hand out reparations checks to anyone with a black face.

Ultimately, the cost in anti-black ill will that reparations would engender would outstrip any benefit from "gaining justice" for slavery. Black Americans do ourselves no good by behaving as this country's permanent mendicant class. We gain nothing from politicians and activists who constantly shake our collective tin cup in search of other people's money.

In short, like a Tiger Woods putt, the entire reparations campaign should tumble down a black hole.

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The Poison of "I'm A Victim" Politics

The Ugly Logic of Us vs. Them

By Jonah Goldberg

I'm an Internet columnist, and my e-mail in-box regularly provides evidence that measures like hate-crime laws, slave reparations proposals, and the general politics of victimology will ultimately lead to ill.

For instance, I've received scads of e-mails about Jesse Dirkhising, the 13-year-old Arkansas boy who was horribly raped and tortured over a two-day period in 1999. He was tied up by two homosexual "lovers," 22 and 38, who stuffed Jesse's mouth with his own underwear, secured the gag with duct tape, tied him to the bed, and then repeatedly sodomized him in various ways. The boy eventually died from asphyxiation while the murderers were making a sandwich in the kitchen.

Obviously, this sort of crime makes even death-penalty opponents feel an itch in their trigger fingers, and reminds us all that there are real monsters in the world. Next to the tragedy of an innocent child dying a slow, painful, and frightening death completely alone save for the laughter of jackals ringing in his ears, every other injustice seems small and petty.

But there is another tragedy, and that is the rage many people who know about this case feel toward the selective media and political coverage of it. The major media did hardly any reporting on the original story, and provided almost no coverage of the trial that resulted this March in conviction of one of the perpetrators. It's clear they didn't want to because the perpetrators were gay. If this had been two white men with a black child, if this had been two straight men torturing a gay teen, if this had been Christians brutalizing a Jewish kid, if, if, if, the coverage would have been very different.

So the only way Jesse gets into the headlines is as an example of media bias offered by angry conservatives. Readers ask, "Where is the outrage we had over Matthew Shepard?" Why does the horrible murder of one gay man warrant thousands of hours of news and millions of gallons of ink, while the snuffing of this child by two gay men warrants only a few local reports and the angry shouts of some talk radio hosts?

The tragedy is that we must ask this question and make those comparisons. The tragedy is that the Brahmins of identity politics, the fanners of the "victim politics" flame, have trained us to think in these ugly categories.

Unfortunately, the logic of "hate crimes" being pushed by liberals requires people to ask such questions. When queried whether a double standard was apparent in the way Dirkhising's murder was ignored by the media, gay spokesmen have insisted, "This has nothing to do with gay people."

Well, why doesn't it? If the cultural or ethnic status of a victim warrants wall-to-wall coverage in one instance, but that same status is said to be utterly irrelevant in another case, people will notice. Which is why identity politics is so pernicious.

If one side of an argument claims that their ethnicity, race, or sexual preference makes them special, those left out of the "coalition of the oppressed" will feel slighted. Their group consciousness will become heightened. They will start counting slights and insults in the same way. "They had Matthew Shepard," say the people sending off e-mails, "We have Jesse Dirkhising."

If we put certain groups on pedestals instead of on equal footing, the cult of victimization will come full flower in this country. And then we will be on the path to Bosnia.

TAE *contributing writer Jonah Goldberg edits* National Review Online.

"Helping" Victims to Their Ruin

By Hendrik Mills

At a tense meeting of our local county commissioners near the end of the Clinton administration, three federal lawyers explained why our community would be sued by the U.S. Department of Justice if we didn't redraw voting lines to create a majority-Indian district. Several Indian activists at the hearing told heart-rending stories of discrimination at the hands of the county clerk—such as being given packets of "only 50" voter registration forms at a time during a tribe-sponsored voter registration drive, and of having to drive miles to register to vote. One impassioned activist, who looked about as Indian as Hillary Clinton, told of feeling politically "excluded"; she later casually mentioned that she attends the University of Montana's law school.

The fact that many white citizens in our rural county have to drive over 75 miles to see a doctor, while the only hospital in the county stands on the reservation and denies treatment to non-Indians, was not mentioned. Also overlooked: The county collects virtually no taxes from Indians who live on the reservation, because they have been exempted from property and new vehicle taxes. Off the reservation, people of all races pay motor vehicle taxes each time they buy a new car or truck. These fees

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reservation get off scot-free. Off the reservation, all farmers, ranchers, businesspeople, and homeowners pay county property taxes to cover the costs of schooling, social welfare services, and the like. But not on the reservation.

Washington wants to endow local Indians with special privileges, giving them a red carpet to political power without requiring them to assume the usual responsibilities borne by other citizens of Blaine County, Montana. This is representation without taxation—every bit as unfair as what King George tried to impose on the colonies.

How does Washington justify all this? By painting Indians as victims. Poverty and other barriers, lectured the gang from the Civil Rights Enforcement Division, U.S. Justice Department, have prevented Indians from being able to take advantage of the democratic process. This "fact," and the fact that our three county commissioners voted in December not to create a specifically Indian-majority voting district, explain why Janet Reno's lawyers filed suit against us.

I'm not sure how these federal attorneys imagined that Indians were being excluded from local political participation, because Indians outnumbered non-Indians at this hearing by four-to-one. The only notice given of this important meeting was an article in that morning's *Great Falls Tribune*, yet four "excluded," "disenfranchised" Indians were able to show up. Since I am a school teacher who didn't have to work on that July day, I did too. Most local residents (who have since registered their vigorous opposition to a racially gerrymandered district) had little details to attend to that morning—like harvesting winter wheat and baling hay, so as to be able to pay the property taxes that keep the county functioning.

Indians, on the other hand, now have vast financial resources behind them—a wide array of federal programs, affirmative action set-asides, and welfare work-exemptions—which allow many to pursue a full-time profession of lobbying for even more funds and "rights." The U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs has a multi-billion dollar budget. Through other channels, the federal government funnels money to Indians for free health care and food. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) alone spent $700 million on Indian housing programs in 1999.

The money spent is not the only cost of our patronization of Indians, however. About a week after the Justice Department enforcers arrived in our county, then-Secretary of HUD Andrew Cuomo appeared on a Montana reservation. He toured the dilapidated houses of the Blackfeet Indians and declared to reporters, "You shouldn't have people living like animals." Our newspaper's headline declared, "Housing Dismays HUD Official," while the front-page photo showed Cuomo sensitively caressing some cracked siding on a house in the Indian town of Heart Butte.

I can almost agree with the Secretary's statement, but I would reword it to say, "People shouldn't live like animals." You see, the substandard houses in question were subsidized by the federal government, and either given, rented, or sold below cost to Indians. The fact that the houses are poorly maintained reflects the irresponsibility of at least one of two parties: the Indian occupant, or the Indian tribal housing authority that manages the houses.

They have been badly damaged by the idea that they are "owed" something, and that the public purse is their route to prosperity.

The inefficiency of Indian-run tribal government is widely known in those parts of Montana close to reservations. Indians employed with the tribal bureaucracies are notorious for their loose interpretation of the word *work*. Not only a commissioners' meeting but also a shopping trip to Billings can be justification for a paid day off.

Cuomo, though, is determined to relieve Indians, the alleged victims, of any blame. The news article summarized his views as follows:

> Cuomo, on his first official visit to Montana, said it's a "sin" that Indian communities such as the Blackfeet Reservation have fallen into the depths of such economic depression and haven't been helped more by the U.S. government and its citizens.

If I hadn't been inoculated against the pangs of white guilt by 13 years of Marxist activism in my youth (which included sharing a jail cell with a Native American), I might actually believe such claims. But the idea that our government has not helped Indians runs up against the facts. On many reservations, for instance, each youngster receives a lump-sum payment—called "treaty money"—upon reaching the age of majority. Relatives of one Indian teenager told me not long ago about their boy receiving his $18,000 cash payment (which he is free to spend however he likes), and that his three siblings are eagerly awaiting theirs.

The individuals most hurt by these subsidies are the Indians themselves. The victim's mindset, and the expectation that they are owed a living, enervate and demoralize many of them.

My school's former science teacher, who previously worked in Heart Butte on the Blackfeet reservation, says he'll never work again on a reservation because the lack of discipline and work ethic among students is so extreme. (He was once seized by a student on a pedestrian overpass and held by his ankles upside-down over the traffic below.) Any attempt to punish the hooligans who rule Indian schools, or to raise academic standards, is routinely opposed by Indian parents and activists as "racism."

I've lived on or worked around Indian reservations for eight years. I can report that dropping political spoils into the laps of their residents has made them dysfunctional and chaotic places. Their residents have been badly damaged by the idea that they are "owed" whatever they want, and that the public purse is their route to prosperity. It would be a terrible idea to encourage this same attitude in other Americans.

Hendrik Mills is a Montana school teacher and writer with extensive experience of the U.S. Indian Health Service.

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Death Spiral on Main Street

Our Postal Service is in worse shape than you think

By Carolyn Lochhead

In a tone of sunny desperation, the U.S. Postal Service has taken to sending out press releases—via fax—which, like much of what this beleaguered giant attempts, only underscore its deepest woes: "The U.S. Postal Service today announced it is attempting to establish a world record to prove that, even in the age of electronic communications and the Internet, the art of card and letter writing is still relevant and a tradition worth keeping." We haven't yet received an update on the record-setting effort.

What we do know is, the Postal Service—employer of 900,000, friend of senior citizen, foe of dog, bearer of the mail through rain, sleet, snow and dark of night, knitter of national unity since the founding of the Republic—is dying. A consensus has emerged, as yet little-noticed outside postal circles, that the Postal Service is trapped in a "death spiral" of falling mail volume, rising costs and rate increases that spur more volume declines. The long economic boom masked underlying deficiencies for several years, and the recent slowdown is now unmasking them.

The Postal Service now expects staggering losses of up to $2.4 billion this fiscal year, up hundreds of millions from losses projected just four months earlier. The General Accounting Office, which has added the Postal Service to its list of federal agencies at "high risk" of racking up massive taxpayer liabilities, said the service may breach its $15 billion statutory debt limit by the end of next year. The service needs immediate attention now, GAO warned, "before the situation escalates into a crisis where the options for action may be more limited."

As Board of Governors vice chairman David Fineman delicately told Congress recently, "Unfortunately, it appears we may have turned a corner into a more perilous environment." The Postal Service appears clueless as to what to do about this peril, other than the very thing that everyone outside the Postal Service agrees will only speed its demise.

The Postal Service response is: raise rates. The service just in January raised the price of a stamp another penny, to 34 cents, and increased rates an average of 10 percent for most bulk mailers. In May, it "adjusted" most rates (except for a first-class stamp) up another 2.6 percent. It is expected to file for another 15 percent rate increase in June.

The news has left its big customers in the magazine, catalogue, newspaper, bill payment and direct mail business apoplectic. "If you're in a death spiral, you don't take action that's going to nail your coffin," said Nina Link, president of the Magazine Publishers of America. "If they raise rates, particularly the numbers they're looking at, they're going to be in worse shape sooner...I mean, it's terrible business."

Large mailers say the proposed new rate increase, combined with the last one, is only going to drive away more of the bulk business that the Postal Service needs to survive. Volume will drop even faster, raising the average cost of delivering what's left, leading to another rate increase, in an endless cycle of self-immolation. "The Postal Service itself has testified that it has seen a drop-off of mail since the last rate increase," says Gene DelPolito, president of the Association for Postal Commerce, a mailers group. "So let me get this straight: Your solution then is another rate increase? That's going to bring the mail back?"

Rate increases have already damaged the Postal Service's most profitable lines, like priority mail, the poor-man's version of Federal Express. Starting in June, Nordstrom.com will stop using priority mail, citing high costs. "That's their most profitable product, and after the January rate increase, the volume of priority mail really dropped off," said Robert E. McLean, executive director of the Mailers Council,

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the nation's largest association of mailers.

Magazine publishers, who estimate the proposed new rate increase alone will cost them $500 million a year, have issued "Stop! Before You Hurt Yourself" ads warning that rate increases kill off new magazine launches, specialty publications, and ultimately the post itself. U.S. banks spent $2.6 billion on postage and postal fees in 1999, and every penny rate increase adds $75 million to their costs. Little surprise then that in just three years, mail volume from banks plummeted 18 percent. "We're talking about people who measure postal rate increases in the millions of dollars, not in pennies," McLean says.

> The General Accounting Office warns the Postal Service is at "high risk" of racking up massive taxpayer liabilities.

To be sure, not everything is the Postal Service's fault. As its press release indicates, its biggest challenge is the Internet, which is replacing traditional first-class mail—the Postal Service's mother lode, making up over 50 percent of its business—with unexpected speed. Worse, most analysts, including the Postal Service itself, believe the Internet's full force hasn't even hit yet. E-mail is fast supplanting business-to-business correspondence, a huge portion of first-class mail. E-mail is also tearing into personal correspondence, even such things as invitations and greeting cards. And e-mail is about to knock out a massive portion of business-to-consumer mail. The Postal Service itself projects that half of all bills and payments will soon be sent electronically.

Then there's the government, which may be the biggest single mailer of all and is now under mandate to slash paperwork and streamline operations. The GAO says an astounding two thirds of the 880 million Social Security checks, tax refunds and other federal payments sent in 1999 by the Treasury Department were delivered electronically.

Faced with such facts, the Postal Service has acknowledged that it needs to do something in addition to raising rates—like cutting costs. How? One idea is to slash the desperately needed capital investment that will extend automation and help it preserve what business it has left. It has also threatened to nix its sacrosanct Saturday delivery and shutter thousands of small post offices in Congressional districts across the nation.

These last two wildly unpopular moves are generally dismissed as a classic "let's close the Washington Monument" ploy to build public sympathy for the new rate increase. The moves drew the expected headlines, and having served their purpose, they are quietly being withdrawn, given that the Postal Service knows quite well that Congress last year specifically forbade the closure of any small post office, no matter how costly, in an obscure clause secreted into a mammoth spending bill.

Adding to its woes, the number of personal and business addresses the Postal Service delivers to continues to soar by roughly 2 million a year, piling on more costs. And the Postal Service's retirement expenses truly boggle the mind. These are set to rise from $9.1 billion this year to $14 billion in 2010. While it needs to shed labor, dealing with retirements will require high management skill: This year and next it will lose 36 percent of its executives, 25 percent of its managers and 16 percent of its career workforce, and by 2010, 85 percent of its executives, 74 percent of its managers and 50 percent of its career workforce.

These projections dramatically illustrate that the Postal Service has a golden opportunity for wholesale labor and management restructuring, but taking advantage of it will require management skill of the sort the Postal Service has seldom if ever demonstrated. Indeed, one of the biggest problems plaguing the service is decades of some of the worst labor/management relations in the United States that have left good employees frustrated and disillusioned.

"The Postal Service has stripped their workers of almost all decision making," one worker notes. "In the 1990s, when American business was getting leaner and meaner, the USPS kept adding supervisors." "Choked by an extremely bloated bureaucracy, we have layers of non-productive managers that do little more than wander about with clipboards and coffee cups clutched in their hands," says one frustrated mail carrier. "We are being destroyed by idiots in management, and stubborn resistance on the part of the unions. Nobody seems to be interested in asking the troops in the trenches for input."

Managers, for their part, complain bitterly of unproductive employees who are immune to firing, and even some employees agree. "The one thing the USPS needs to do to save itself is something it is unable to do, and that is get rid of incompetent employees," says a retired postal clerk of 32 years. "The USPS management has its hands pretty much tied on this issue. I frankly cannot see a solution to the problem."

"We need another rate hike to keep up with the drop in demand."

So the Postal Service is facing a competitive onslaught, driven by a technological revolution, using a quasi-business model Congress devised in 1971 that everyone agrees doesn't work. The 1971 Postal Reorganization Act provisions include: requiring universal delivery to every U.S. household and business, no matter how remote, at a single, universal rate; requiring an absurdly long, complex and costly public filing for any rate increase; prohibitions on closing post offices that all but require an act of Congress; requiring arbitration of just about any labor/management issue. Its mailbox monopoly shields it from the bracing slap of competition in its core business, while labor protections likewise shield its workforce.

"The postal service was not structured in the 1970 Postal Reorganization Act to be a competitive enterprise," says DelPolito. "That's why Congress gave it a statutory monopoly. Unfortunately, it must exist within a competitive environment, not only because it has gained competitors of the likes of UPS and FedEx, but also because increasingly businesses and probably very soon consumers will be bypassing the use of mail largely for their day to day communications and the way that they transact business with one another. The world that existed in 1970 no longer exists today, and until and unless we change those incentives, we will not change their behavior."

Some say, just get rid of the monopoly protections and let the P.O. sink or swim. Large mailers violently disagree, and they have a point. The cost of universal daily delivery to every U.S. household is

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high, and it is unlikely that it would be fully replaced in a competitive market, at least not at anything like current postal rates. Internet or no, there will, for the foreseeable future, remain a need for universal delivery of hard-copy mail.

The Postal Service delivery network includes more than 235,000 routes, 38,000 post offices, stations and branches, and 350 major mail processing and distribution facilities. Remote rural delivery, now heavily subsidized, would have to pay full freight, which likely could be rather high in places like Alaskan hamlets just south of the Arctic Circle. Dangerous urban neighborhoods, where the Postal Service delivers Social Security checks under armed guard, are also not a profitable plum that private companies are eager to pick.

And those are the very constituencies—the rural, the poor, the generally uncomputerized—that Congress is not about to leave stranded or subject to huge postage increases. So libertarians are probably singing into the ether when they advocate pure, immediate privatization, as economically rational as the case might be.

There are other options. Mailers want the Postal Service to cut its exorbitant labor costs, which comprise 76 percent of its total costs, far higher than just about any other business. Rival Federal Express's labor costs, for comparison, are barely more than half that.

GAO agrees, saying what the Postal Service desperately needs to do is raise productivity, which it politely noted the post has repeatedly proven itself unable to do. Despite large advances in automation, the Postal Service's total factor productivity, including labor and capital, rose a pitiful 9.1 percent over three long decades. "That's a really embarrassing number that should bother the Postal Service more than it does, considering the billions of dollars it has invested in automation," McLean says.

The Deputy Postmaster General promised Congress that over the next five years, the service will cut 75,000 work years, reduce administrative overhead by 25 percent, and cut transportation costs by 10 percent. "The Service has not yet specified, however, how these cuts would be achieved," the GAO notes. On the revenue side, the Postal Service has tried venturing into new businesses, including everything from email to selling t-shirts, and failed miserably. Its own five-year strategic plan says no new revenue is forecast for its new products and services for the next five years. Since issuing the plan, the Service has been revising down its revenue forecasts for new products.

Postmaster General Henderson's recently-named successor is John Potter, a 23-year veteran of the Service and the current Chief Operating Officer. Reformers had hoped Stephen Goldsmith, the former Wunder-Mayor of Indianapolis who pushed privatization where no politician dared take it before, would be appointed to the post and somehow work wonders. But to do that, Goldsmith would have needed an act of Congress. Without a major overhaul that fundamentally changes the Postal Service's incentive structure, there is probably little that any new Postmaster General can do.

USPS's profitable foreign delivery is under an onslaught of competition from newly invigorated, partially privatized European posts, including TNT (the old Dutch mail), Royal Mail of the United Kingdom, and Deutsche Post of Germany. Their privatization models are there to follow. Whether Congress will get around to looking at them, let alone follow them, is another matter.

European postal privatization has proven hugely successful. Meanwhile the U.S. Postal Service remains mired in a failed 30-year-old quasi-government model.

The Dutch system, often cited as the best model for privatization, faced similar if not worse problems as the U.S. Postal Service two decades ago. A description of the early 1980s Dutch post could apply to the Postal Service today: It had become "an object of derision because of slow-moving packages, fuming business clients, surging labor costs, falling employee productivity and climbing prices," according to a study by the Lexington Institute.

Political opposition to reform was intense, and it took not one but two high-profile, non-partisan commissions that answered every conceivable objection to embark on a gradual but complete overhaul that allowed the Dutch post to be run like a business. The reforms allowed the Dutch Post, now called TNT, to raise private capital for much needed investment; vastly increase productivity; and abolish civil service status of postal employees in exchange for allowing them to buy stock, permitting workers to become more flexible and efficient, and ridding itself of what the study called an "often stultifying bureaucratic culture."

European postal privatization has proven such a success that by 2003, the European Union will require that every member nation open itself to postal competition, for the first time ever allowing private carriers to compete in all classes of mail. The mandate is now driving a competitive free-for-all in Europe. Meanwhile the U.S. Postal Service remains mired in a 30-year-old failed quasi-government model.

"For other government-run postal services, including the United States Postal Service," the Lexington Institute study concluded, the Dutch post "stands as a model for both the underlying business value that can be unlocked with postal privatization and the successful implementation of postal privatization in the face of political opposition." Postmaster General Henderson himself admitted in May, "I think the monopoly will be gradually reduced and opened to competition. There's a lot of resistance to it today. It's kind of like speaking about the devil."

If Congress acts according to form, it will wait until the Postal Service faces a major financial crisis, and then will do some ad hoc partial reforms. Under such a timetable, it could take a decade, if not longer, before Congress even begins to look at the European privatizations.

In the meantime, Henderson has announced a national campaign for school children to design birthday cards to America, part of a Postal Service effort to revive letter writing.

"Writing, sending, and receiving cards and letters is a tradition that has preserve our nation's history and changed lives—particularly in times of war and times of personal triumph and tragedy," Henderson states. And unlike those unmentionable "other forms of communication," he adds, "card and letter writing is timeless, personal, and immediately tangible."

The children have been instructed to send their cards to the National Postal Museum. Which is where the Postal Service shows every sign of winding up itself. But not before it does a lot of economic damage along the way.

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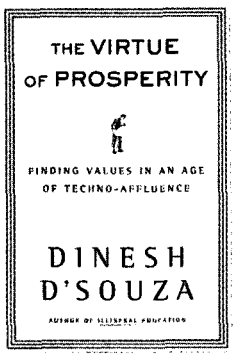

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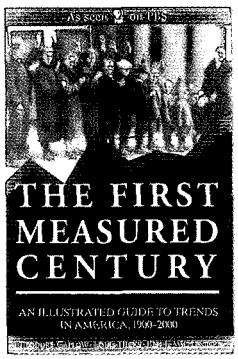

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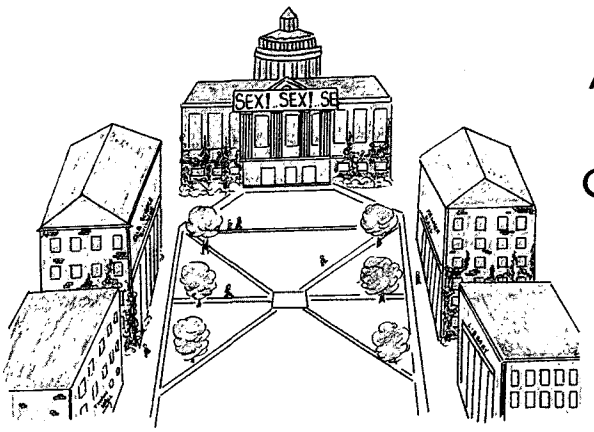

Jean Sorensen

On Today's Campuses, *Everything* is Sexualized

By Edward Ericson

Recently the president of a small college in Nebraska was forced to resign when he was caught committing plagiarism. He was lucky. He might have been charged with rape.

To understand what cribbing material off the Internet has to do with rape, you need to know that in America's universities today, everything—and we mean *everything*—is being sexualized. Both in theory and in practice, it's sex, sex, everywhere sex.

The *Chronicle of Higher Education* starts reading like a sensationalistic tabloid. At Wesleyan University a student posted fliers announcing plans to make a pornographic film about life on campus, and eleven students volunteered to "get paid to get laid." At the San Francisco Art Institute, a student staged a piece of performance art in class that featured an enema and unprotected oral sex between him and a blindfolded male volunteer. The professor, who was among the 22 onlookers, didn't say stop, since "a professor is not there to police students about their work." The student explained his art work was "an exploration of the notion of the master-slave dialectic in Hegel," and that he was artistically investigating "the psychology of risk."

Weird behavior and jangling academic theory of this sort trace directly to the professoriate. Take, for instance, an article recently published by *College English*, the flagship journal of the National Council of Teachers of English. In "Sexuality, Textuality: The Cultural Work of Plagiarism," Rebecca Moore Howard, writing-program director at Syracuse University, says she wants teachers to stop charging students with plagiarism, because—and here comes the sex—"the discourse of plagiarism regulates not only textuality but sexuality: Embedded in the discursive construction of plagiarism are metaphors of gender, weakness, collaboration, disease, adultery, rape, and property that communicate a fear of violating sexual as well as textual boundaries." Welcome to the world in which "transgress" and "subvert" are favorite verbs and such nouns as "nature," "patriarchy," and "binaries" (as in male/female) are curse words.

Howard's digging through thousands of years of writing unearths, she says, a bad pattern: objectionable metaphors presenting authors as male and written texts ("the body") as female. A teacher's guide published in 1926 seems to have compared plagiarism to disease, and "disease is, of course, of the body, and a prominent tradition of the West says that the body is feminine." Howard discovers a "gendering of authorship" that "involves the equation of masculinity…and originality," as well as "a less straightforward equation of women…and plagiarism." To object to plagiarism in these circumstances is to advance sexual oppression.

And then there is rape. By a logic too twisty to repeat, Howard concludes that "The victim of plagiarism is the victim of homosexual rape. The male author has been raped by the male plagiarist." The deepest explanation of "the fury expressed by many commentators on plagiarism" is the "compulsory heterosexuality" of contemporary U.S. culture, the professor argues. So maybe that college president in Nebraska should be glad he wasn't treated even more roughly.

Conclusion: "Let's get out of the business of valorizing an elusive originality, criminalizing imitation, and reinforcing positive prejudices of gender and sexual preference."

Excuse us, but doesn't feminist argument of this sort depend on simply adopting, rather than resisting, sexual stereotypes of the male=strong, female=weak variety? Doesn't it also trivialize the crime of rape? And based on this logic, why not just defend plagiarism, since it leaves open the door to the kind of collaborative writing Howard claims women excel at? (Call it collaboration through the ages.) Is the commitment to "liberatory pedagogies" so complete at universities today that none of the editors at the national journal where this rant was published asked such questions before accepting it?

TAE *contributing writer Edward Ericson is a professor of English at Calvin College.*

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Meanwhile, one wonders what effect theorizers who sexualize everything may be having on the actual lives of their students. The trouble with schooling is that sometimes students listen to what their teachers say.

Lennard Davis, who teaches English at the State University of New York at Binghamton, writes in a recent issue of The *Chronicle of Higher Education* about his college-student son, who has learned his lessons well. The parents, "progressive academics" both, have established "a poster family for permissiveness" and have willingly accepted "virtually any behavior from our children—from their experimentation with marijuana to having their sexual partners sleep over at our house." Dad teaches a course on "The Different Body," in which he shows his students a picture of "a nude person with long flowing hair, breasts, tattoos, and a penis."

But then Davis's son announced he is "transgendered," and even the progressive academics had a little trouble with that. "Had he announced, 'I'm gay,'" dad explains, "my wife and I would have been relatively prepared to say, 'Great! Who's the lucky guy?'" But, no, the lad, "a very masculine guy" who continues to be "completely heterosexual," explains, "I'm a girl. I want to wear dresses, makeup, and challenge the whole patriarchal, bourgeois idea of gender." He is merely claiming "the right to gender ambiguity and gender contradiction," which the U.S. Constitution may not have enumerated but which the International Bill of Gender Rights of 1993 guarantees. Dad learns from son—daughter?—that "gender is so complex that there are 100 genders, and we can morph through 20 of them in a single morning." Some issues still need to be worked out, such as which public restroom to use when the socially constructed need for a certain form of physical relief (don't say nature) calls.

These professorial parents are thoroughly pro-choice (unless perhaps it's about schools for other people's children). Yet their son's choice leaves them feeling unaccountable embarrassment, humiliation, shame. Mom's view on cross-dressing is "N.I.M.H.—Not In My House." The grandparents are "somewhat conveniently" dead. The relief that surges on the home front when Sonny Boy catches a Greyhound for a concert out west is interrupted by an angry long-distance phone call: "I can't believe that you, of all people…can't accept this. These are my people! They are being discriminated against, cast out, and you can't accept it?"

Dad is left to muse about those cutting-edge theorists he has been coolly purveying to students, names now thrown back at him by his son: Michel Foucault, Judith Butler. "Thanks, Judy!" His son is riding that "fourth wave" of gender activism that makes feminism, gay rights, and queer theory "seem merely to be part of a conservative undertow."

The son eventually discovered that his politics do not sit well with other "elements in the trannie community." Other trannies apparently "do not regard him as truly transgendered, because he hasn't taken hormones or had an operation." (Such intolerant, judgmental folks.)

Professor Dad's part in the story has a happy ending, though. With "no counterargument" to offer, he concludes that his son is "completely right…. I had to confront my own prejudices and realize that I was a bigot." Now Dad is getting used to seeing his kid in dresses, though he's not yet ready to call his son his daughter, and proper pronouns are a problem. Parent and child have closed ranks "against the narrowness of certain kinds of identity politics, and see our goal as opening up the question of identity through a notion of the mutability of the body." Child brings to parent's attention good books, such as *Transvestism: A Handbook* and *Bound and Gagged*. Parent dutifully puts some of the titles on his college syllabus.

The trouble with schooling is that sometimes students listen to what their teachers say.

Moms and dads who yearn to break free of "the gender binary" and experience their own paroxysm of self-congratulation can emulate the parenting model of Professor Davis. "My child and I have grown closer through what might have been a terrible conflict, one that in some families might have been the end of the line." And they can thank him and other liberators for transmitting their wisdom to America's young in the classrooms of our colleges and universities.

THE ECONOMIST *continued from page 49*

1970s with the aim of securing long-term world leadership had, by the 1990s, produced few world-beaters. The revolution in information technology seems to have passed Japan by; the two-legged race of hardware and software favors the software side, and English, not Japanese, has become the programmer's protocol. There has been much talk in Japan of joining the IT revolution, but no real willingness to hire the necessary foreign teachers or to improve the country's rigid, old-fashioned education system. So Japan is poorly placed to lead a new revolution in computers.

Many attempts have been made to draw up an organizational chart of modern Japan in order to locate the decision-making (or, as things now are, the decision-avoiding) center. All have failed, because there isn't one. Japan works rather by endless negotiation and deal-making between semi-autonomous interests, of which the government bureaucracy, business, and the politicians—who expect to be paid for their services as intermediaries—make up the "iron triangle" misleadingly nicknamed "Japan Inc." Negotiated in bars and geisha houses by boozy men who were at school and university together, these unwritten understandings are built on personal trust. Status, rather than personal contract and merit, is all-important. But when there is need for a change of course, the system freezes up.

Remaking Japan as a contract-bound commercial economy will be a long job—if it ever happens.

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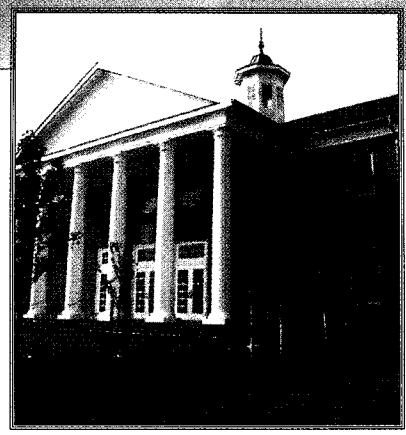
CAMPUS CRUSADE

The Unexpected Boomlet at Religious Colleges

By Naomi Schaefer



When Tom Monaghan called his friend Bernard Dobranski and said, "I'm thinking about starting a new law school," Dobranski recalls laughing, "What? Do you think we have too few lawyers, Tom?"

"I think you have to ask a different question," Dobranski continued, "Do we have enough good lawyers? If your answer is no, then another law school devoted to doing things differently would be appropriate."

This wasn't just a conversation between two men longing for a better world. Monaghan, who was about to make $4 billion selling his holdings in Domino's Pizza, placed this call to Dobranski, then dean at Catholic University's law school, to offer him a job—as dean of a brand new law school, whose mission was to "offer an outstanding legal education in fidelity to the Catholic faith."

"We talked for about an hour," says Dobranski, "at the end of which, he said, 'Are you ready to come up here and do it?'" Dobranski told Monaghan he wanted to think about it, "but I had already decided if he is really serious about this and wants to do it the right way, I'm going."

Less than two years later, Ave Maria Law School opened its doors in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Housed in a former laboratory building that Monaghan purchased from the University of Michigan and refurbished in the Frank Lloyd Wright style, it opened last August with an inaugural class of 75.

Christopher McGowan, who proudly announces he "was the first person to say yes to Ave Maria," had never intended to go to law school. After stints working on political campaigns in his home state of Iowa, going to flight school, and working for Honeywell, McGowan, 33, says when he read about Ave Maria, he thought, "If that's what they're teaching, then it's worth going to law school."

Monica Secord had a similar reaction. She was starting her second year of a Ph.D. program in classics at the University of Texas, and hadn't really given much thought to law school. Then her dentist—a neighbor of a member of Ave Maria's board—told her about the school at one of her checkups. Secord says she realized it was a "unique opportunity." Near the top of her class at Notre Dame, Secord says she has always gone to Mass regularly but has never considered herself "a particularly religious person." Yet she welcomes the opportunity to be at what she calls "a spiritually healthy place."

Nisha Kuttothara also says she was never heavily involved in religious organizations in college, but she did "always have a soft spot" in her heart for religion. This was "the first time I was mixing religion and my studies together." More than one friend—including the general counsel at the company where she took a job after college—told her to think carefully about going to Ave Maria. Many expressed concern about the explicitly religious nature of the school. "When they ask why the school had to be called Ave Maria," Kuttothara answers, "What do you think Notre Dame means?"

Kuttothara had taken a few courses at New York University's law school. "The classes I took there," she says, "never went beyond the lessons. The classes here are more philosophically based, bringing in outside theories, which really helps to keep my interest."

Ave Maria professor Stephen Safranek finds most of his new students are bright and willing to work hard. The LSAT scores of Ave Maria's first class are comparable with those of freshmen at many of the nation's top law schools. "You give them much more material here. They're interested in it. They want to do it."

Dobranski credits part of Ave Maria's success to the generosity of Monaghan and other donors, which enables the school both to be more selective and to provide large scholarships to those students who are admitted. "Most other new law schools start out at the bottom. They desperately need students because that's how you pay the bills, but schools that take anyone get a reputation for mediocrity that never goes away."

And, as qualified as they are when they enter Ave Maria, Safranek adds, "when they come out of here they understand the fundamental principles more than other law students would."

Dobranski says, "We are going to try to bring in the Catholic tradition in every course where it's relevant and appropriate." He adds, "I once said of course you couldn't do that in a tax course, and as soon as the words were out of my mouth, I realized that Taxation is probably one of the best courses to bring in these values."

"We are constantly reminding ourselves that the first thing we have to do is teach the law," Dobranski adds. "If students do not get the technical training, we're not doing our job."

Some Ave Maria students don't plan to become attorneys. Most, however, not only intend to become lawyers, but aim to reform the

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TAE *contributing writer Naomi Schaefer is writing a book on this subject as a Phillips Foundation fellow.*

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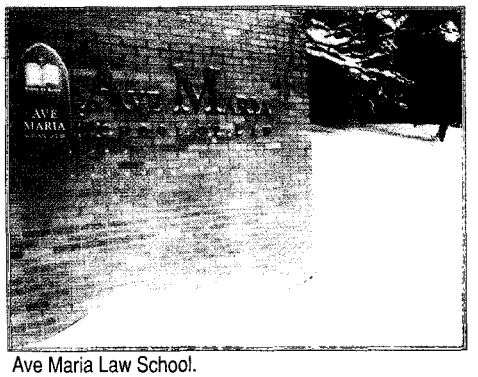
profession in the process. At the age of 31, David Krause left his job as a mechanical engineer in Louisiana and moved with his wife and three kids to Michigan in order to attend Ave Maria. He learned about the school from an article in *USA Today*. "I never wanted to be a lawyer before I read the article...but it was about lawyers who were interested in justice over winning. I hope there will be a few stars among us who will really change things in the profession. I think there will be more than a few."



Ave Maria Law School.

Attempting to combine academic excellence and technical competence with centuries of deep religious tradition.

Ave Maria has not yet been accredited. As a rule, the American Bar Association will not even review a school's application for accreditation until they have been open for a year. In fact, the students at Ave Maria may complete two years of the school's program before they even find out whether they will be allowed to take the bar exam when they graduate. The school certainly has a very good chance of becoming accredited, since every member of its extraordinarily qualified faculty has taught for at least six years at other accredited law schools. In addition, Dean Dobranski has served on the ABA's board of accreditation.

The students at Ave Maria have what Nisha Kuttothara calls an "entrepreneurial" spirit. Professor Richard Meyers has also been struck by the special enthusiasm of the students. "At other schools," he explains, "a number of students will leave right before the first week because another school will open up its waiting list. They don't want to be at any particular school, just the best school they can get in. We don't really have that with our students." Monica Secord agrees there is "a certain enthusiasm at Ave Maria because we are part of something new." She and her classmates seem excited at the prospect of "shaping the school." "Our actions," she thinks, "will become tradition."

Within the first couple of months of school, the students at Ave Maria have already begun some traditions, starting several extracurricular organizations, including a chapter of the Federalist Society, a pro-life organization, and a group for the spouses of the students.

But it is the school's religious tradition that most concerns the students and faculty. As many Catholic (and other) religious educational institutions have grown increasingly secular over the years, Meyers says he is "acutely aware" of the danger that the school's Catholic ideals will be compromised over time. "Even if you have this idea of a place that tries to emphasize the Catholic identity, what happens thirty years from now? Or even ten years?"

The school, as Meyers explains, "is trying to be careful that we hire people who are really committed to the mission of the school." The school stresses its Catholicism in other ways. Many students attend daily Mass in the school chapel, and Ave Maria's chaplain, Father Michael P. Orsi, is also a regular presence on campus. But as Meyers acknowledges, "there are no guarantees."

Creating a religious atmosphere within an academic setting is the overarching project of Patrick Henry College as well, but since all of the students here are undergraduates who live on campus, the administrators have an easier, and more difficult, job. The idea for Patrick Henry came from students and parents. Mike Farris, the school's founder, recalls that as president of the Home School Legal Defense Fund (HSLDF) he would travel the country meeting parents engaged in homeschooling. Inevitably, they would ask where they could send their kids for college that would serve to strengthen, rather than undermine, the Christian principles they had been trying to teach at home.

It was "apparent" to Farris "that secular schools are at war with people of faith." Politically correct teaching, he explains, is often "an attack on the Christian system of belief" and parents ask, "why should I pay $100,000 to have someone attack me and my child for four years?" Farris, who has homeschooled ten children of his own, began what he calls "baby steps" to remedy this problem. First, HSLDF acquired some land in Purcellville, Virginia. Then they hired their first staff members to begin planning, hiring, and raising funds.

Patrick Henry has a traditional curriculum with an emphasis on political science, combining a Great Books education with lessons in practical government. Currently, government is the school's only major, but they are planning to add others like journalism and classical liberal arts. Because the school is only about an hour from Washington, students will have opportunities in their junior and senior years for apprenticeships at think tanks and congressional offices.

When Brandon Wilhoite heard about Patrick Henry, he was well into the equivalent of his senior year of high school. Living with his mother and three siblings in Arizona, Wilhoite had been homeschooled his entire life (with the exception of a few classes at the local community college). But having done well on his SATs and his school work, while playing a little baseball on the side, Wilhoite thought about applying to Harvard, Yale, and Georgetown, though he was past the deadline for all three. Then, in February of last year, he got an e-mail from a friend about Patrick Henry.

He admits to being skeptical. "The school didn't have a name. It wasn't accredited. I didn't expect it to have a good curriculum." So he applied to Georgetown after the deadline. The admissions office there agreed to consider his application, but he decided to apply to Patrick Henry as well. In the meantime, Wilhoite says, "I prayed. The Lord opens doors and closes doors." Within a week, he was admitted to Patrick Henry and accepted.

Wilhoite says he wasn't quite sure what to expect. "Other homeschooled kids I met over the years were generally smart, but the students here far exceeded my expectations." Indeed the students at Patrick Henry are an impressive bunch academically, having turned down Harvard, William and Mary, and other top schools to be here.

Political scientist Robert Stacey says his students at Patrick Henry are "every bit as good as his best students" at the University of Virginia and the University of Richmond, where he taught

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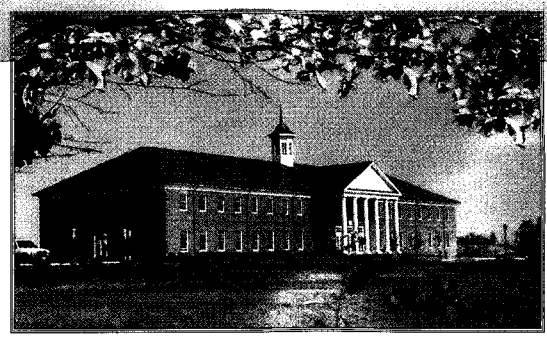
previously. "I can hold these students to a higher standard than I have ever done in my life."

They always come to class prepared, Stacey claims, and they show few problems adjusting to being in a classroom. Classroom learning, he explains, "is only the tip of the iceberg." The kids who are "really at a disadvantage" in higher education today, says Stacey, "are the ones [at other colleges] who have had classroom experience, but little experience with books." His current students are able to fluently read—and discuss—classic works of political philosophy.



Patrick Henry College.

Enrollment at 100 of the strictest religious colleges has jumped a remarkable 24 percent over six years.

If the students at Patrick Henry are first-rate, the faculty seems to have a ways to go. In the class on the Old Testament, the professor simply reads passages and then repeats them in plainer English. What discussion takes place seems to center merely on what "we" (those who believe that Scripture is a God-given text) say in answer to "them" (secularists).

In a state government class, the lecture is largely a screed against government overregulation. The students seem to know more about the subject than the professor, who can only talk about his home state of Alabama, where he worked in a libertarian-leaning think tank.

But with today's glut of Ph.D.s, more qualified professors may eventually come to Patrick Henry, located near a major city and boasting enthusiastic students. This may take some time, however, since Patrick Henry's administrators aim to hire academics who are mostly evangelical Christians, not a common combination within faculty lounges.

Some have criticized the idea of a college whose faculty and students are all devout. Wilhoite, who is part of the school's debate team, insists students have plenty of healthy political and religious disagreements. "We argue about which issues were most important in starting the Civil War." While Wilhoite believes he "would have done O.K. at a secular college," he worries that many people are "brainwashed out of their religion by college." Stanley Watson, a political scientist at Patrick Henry who also homeschools his own children says he would never send them to a secular college. "A 40-year-old professor can always out-argue an 18-year-old student....The Christian worldview," he emphasizes, "must be well developed" before these kids are sent out into the world.

Michael Daniels came to Patrick Henry as a junior. In addition to writing the school song, Daniels is chairman of the college's student government, which is still being created. "It's like a microcosm of the Constitutional Convention in 1787," Daniels explains, his eyes lighting up. "We want to keep the government as limited as possible," he adds.

Students are also writing the school's honor code. Theresa Stilzell explains that there's been a good deal of disagreement over the school's rules. For example, many of the school's students are put off by popular music, and don't want it played in dorms.

The school's morals, however, are not up for discussion. Patrick Henry's students must agree to certain standards in order to enroll—among them a requirement that students' parents know whom they are dating. This doesn't mean students must gain parental permission, Farris explains, but "if a parent were to call us and say, 'Give me an objective evaluation of this person,' we could tell the parent whether he was a good student and whether he had any discipline issues." The policy doesn't bother Wilhoite, who says he wouldn't consider a serious relationship "until after college" because he wants to concentrate on his schoolwork. Theresa Stilzell is pleased with the rule as well, explaining that "it takes the pressure off" to date. And, she adds, she always tells her mother whom she is dating anyway.

For the most part, however, students at Patrick Henry are happy with campus life: single-sex dorms, required chapel attendance, a "business casual" dress code, prohibitions on drugs, alcohol, pornography, and profanity. Students note that comparable evangelical schools have similar rules. In comparison to some, suggests Stilzell, Patrick Henry is "trusting that our character will show without the rules."

It is difficult at this early stage to determine what kind of success Ave Maria and Patrick Henry might have. Ave Maria's insistence on academic excellence and technical competence will no doubt serve it well. And it taps into centuries of deep Catholic intellectual tradition. While the building blocks of a classical education are certainly in place at Patrick Henry College, the school's stern moral standards may make it more difficult to find the high-quality faculty that will be critical to its prosperity.

But the opening of new doors at Patrick Henry and Ave Maria last year is only one small part of a wider pattern. Over the last decade, enrollment at religious colleges has surged, with many students and parents choosing religious colleges as a reaction against the politically correct, morally agnostic patterns of educating that prevail at many schools.

At the almost 100 four-year liberal arts colleges that are members of the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities, enrollment has jumped a remarkable 24 percent from 1990 to 1996. This is much faster than the growth at other private colleges—which is interesting given that CCCU members are all committed to teaching Christian doctrine, hiring only professors who share the faith, and providing a religious atmosphere outside the classroom.

As a recent Lilly Endowment study observes, "Religion's relentless insistence on a place in the public square is keenly felt on college campuses where it was once written off as academically passé." If our universities sometimes serve as early indicators of where America is headed, today's surging interest in faith-based higher education may bring the nation some surprises in the years to come.

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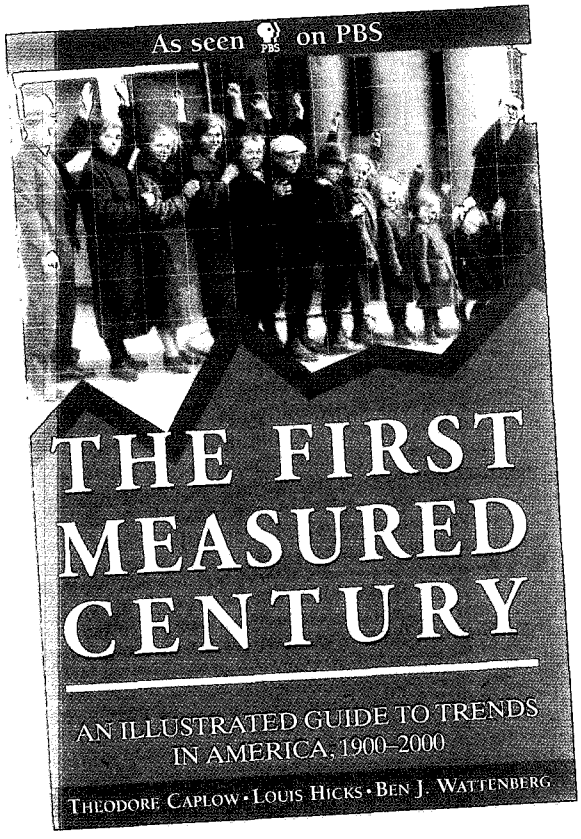

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The Moral Roots of Liberty and Prosperity

By Jennifer Roback Morse

"All the members of human society stand in need of each other's assistance.... Where the necessary assistance is reciprocally afforded from love, from gratitude, from friendship and esteem, the society flourishes and is happy." —Adam Smith

We face a deep problem today: The family where each member pursues his own self-interest. I have lived in such a family. I learned, to my surprise, that such homes do not make people very happy. A family held together by a series of contractual understandings, even reasonable and well-developed ones, turns out to be less stable and satisfying than a family held together by that intangible, often misunderstood, quality called love.

I am an economist. When I first encountered the ideas of free market economics and libertarian political theory I was captivated by their logic, consistency, and simplicity. But if I am completely honest with myself, I have to admit I was also enchanted by the application of those ideas to my personal life. I enjoyed believing that I could do anything I chose, and still expect a reasonably good outcome, even if it was not "any part of my intention." I found the libertarian emphasis on contracts as a tool for free and independent people particularly appealing. I had a lot of difficult relatives. I thought it was swell to kiss them good-bye because I never voluntarily agreed to be in a relationship with them.

I remain a defender of laissez-faire economics; the free market is the only viable game in town. I also continue to support most libertarian political theory; when the topic is the proper relationship between the individual and the state, libertarianism is pretty much the right path. The issue is whether these ideas have direct counterparts in the conduct of our personal lives. I argue in a new book that free market economic ideas cannot be extended into a full-fledged philosophy of life.

Yet there *is* a relationship between libertarianism and family life: The freer we hope to be from artificial restraints, the more we need loving families. A free society needs the family because the family does an important job that no other institution can do. The family transforms helpless babies from self-centered bundles of impulses, desires, and emotions into adult people capable of social behavior.

The family teaches the child to trust, to cooperate, and to restrain himself. Neither the free market nor self-governing political institutions can survive unless the vast majority of the population possesses these skills. People inculcate these qualities in their children as a side effect of loving them. After all, we are not born as

This is adapted by the editors from Jennifer Roback Morse's new book Love and Economics: Why the Laissez-Faire Family Doesn't Work *(Spence Publishing).*

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fully rational adults, capable of grasping our true interests, able to make contracts and other agreements, able to defend our property rights. We are born as helpless babies.

Contracts are the tools used by free people to arrange their affairs for mutual advantage. But, it is often not practical to make provision for every possible contingency that might arise during the life of the contract. In these situations, people are vulnerable to opportunistic and predatory behavior from their contracting partners. The market does not perfectly reward the ethic of promise-keeping upon which freedom depends. Because the potential losses from unscrupulous behavior can be so large, the system of contracts needs to be supplemented by an ethical system of personal self-restraint.

A system of individuals pursuing their own self-interests cannot be opened up to just anyone with any preferences. Members of street gangs, people who expect something for nothing, con men, and pathological liars cannot be safely turned loose to pursue their own desires, and every advocate of the market knows it. That's why liberty relies on institutions that build strong families.

Honest, independent, and accountable individuals are not born but made—inside of good homes. This need for stable, committed, loving families in turn places demands upon the behavior of individuals. These demands cannot be enforced or even defined by the government in much detail. The opposite of the laissez-faire family is not a government-run family. The proper contrast to the self-centered approach to the family is the self-giving approach.

Far from subsuming or losing the individual, self-giving actually elevates the worth of each individual. Seeing oneself as a gift proves to be a greater act of self-valuing than seeing oneself as a set of desires in need of satisfaction, or as a set of opinions in need of assertion.

After a generation of social experiments, we now have the evidence: children raised in two-parent, married-couple families are more likely to grow up to be the kind of adult who can be accorded a wide swath of individual liberty. Family structure is an area in which unlimited freedom of action may actually encourage intrusive government. This is why backers of minimal government need to take the issues surrounding marriage and children seriously.

It was motherhood that provoked me into figuring this out. In 1991 my husband and I became the parents of two children. Our daughter we conceived. Our son was placed into our care after two and half years in a Romanian orphanage—a time when he was deprived of selfless familial love.

The developmental path of our daughter has been smooth, easy, exactly as the book said it would be. The developmental path of our son has been circuitous and painful, unlike anything we could have predicted. We had to teach our son simple things like making eye contact, creating elementary sounds, noticing other people, even smiling. Our daughter easily takes pleasure in life. Our son can barely relax, even when he is asleep.

Because of the radically different paths our children took early in their lives, our family has had the opportunity to notice what we would have taken for granted. No social program, no government agency, no expensive private tutoring can replace what infants and children routinely receive from their parents.

Contrary to the romantic view, babies are not noble savages: they are just cute savages who have the potential to be tamed. They are totally self-centered, impulsive, and demanding. It is not a foregone conclusion that any particular child will be civilized. Yet inside healthy families, helpless babies are routinely transformed from selfish bundles of desire and emotion into fully socialized adults. The family is uniquely situated to impart trust, cooperation, and self-restraint in children. It does all this as a side effect of loving them. These needs of children, in turn, place constraints on the behavior of the adults.

As we all know, maintaining a loving disposition toward all members of our families can be trying. Most of us have had the experience of wanting to walk away from some family member. If we take the individualist ethos to mean we have a right to do any non-aggressive act, we might easily conclude that our family ties can be dissolved like any other voluntary association.

But the family is not analogous to other forms of association. There is no substitute for the family in creating a disposition to cooperate. The government can't replace the family in this all-important task. Nor have the modern alternatives to the family proved adequate: single and divorced parents have difficulty producing the qualities of cooperation and connectedness in their children. Likewise, children raised primarily by day care workers often have social difficulties. I do not say it is impossible for healthy citizens to emerge from these settings, just that the odds are against it.

The freer we hope to be from artificial restraints, the more we need loving families.

I define love as willing the good of another person. The decision to love enriches and enlarges the recipient. But it also enriches and enlarges the lover, although there are many moments in the course of a loving relationship that require us to surrender our inclinations. Because of these many beneficial effects, the decision to love is a reasonable one.

The primary motivation for living up to the demands of family life must come from within. These are not demands that can be imposed by outsiders through threats or force. Certainly, the government cannot "make" people love each other. Nor can it compel parents to perform the numerous tasks, in all their rich variety and subtlety, that responsible parenthood requires.

While government can't help much in the process of raising responsible children, other institutions can. One important support for many of us has been the church. From the beginning, Americans have debated the contribution that religion might make to the success of our unique experiment in self-government. Religion instructs free people in the requirements of moral behavior. Many of the Founders thought that without religious instruction, citizens would lose sight of what a good and free society needs to succeed.

There is an even more basic contribution of the Judeo-Christian religious tradition to our nation. Our connection with the lov-

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ing God makes it possible for us, as individuals, to keep on loving, even when we are exhausted by love's demands. We can continue caring for others, because the love of God rejuvenates us. A society of liberty and justice requires more human connections and more generosity than almost any other kind of society we can imagine. Surely the existence of an inexhaustible supply of love, available to anyone for the asking, is of more than passing importance for a civilization like ours.

I realize this claim that God actually does something for us is likely to be greeted with skepticism from some. Non-believers might be willing to indulge a religion that is merely an intellectual belief system, or a backdrop for an ethical code. But I open myself to ridicule by divulging that God actually does something for me.

"Oh, so God talks to you, does he?" a light-hearted skeptic might retort. Actually, yes, even without claiming any special, private revelation, a believer can tap the reservoir of public revelation to discover that God is, in a general way, talking to him through the ancient traditions and texts. I have never received instructions from God to march into Luxembourg and proclaim myself queen. More often I receive messages like "call your mother once in a while," "quit whining at your husband," or "you need to apologize to your son." Belief in God does not teach me that I am the center of the universe.

God tells me that I am his precious child and that what I do matters. This part of the conversation empowers me. At the same time, meditating upon God has a way of reminding me that other people are also his precious children, and that I am no more important than they are. The person with whom I am about to quarrel, the person who is not giving me all I think he should, all of the difficult people in my life are just as important to God as I am. That thought can be humbling, even arresting. It is not a thought that gives me unlimited sanction to do anything I want to other people.

Parents try to teach their little children to have regard for others, even while conveying to them that they are uniquely important. This combination of concepts helps the child have a balanced perspective on his relationship to other people. This lesson taught in all the sandboxes and playgrounds of the world captures in microcosm a deep and pervasive reality that we must face throughout our lives. Our status as God's precious children does not give us the license of a spoiled brat. His voice tells us our quarrels are disputes between siblings, that we must show regard for his other offspring.

In any free society, people must hold exactly this realistic perspective on their relationship to the rest of the human race. The American experiment in self-government will surely falter unless the vast majority of our people possess a reasonable view of their own dignity, coupled with a similar view of the value of other people.

At the core of our relationship with God is love. He loves me and I love Him. Through that experience, I can be so filled-up with love that I can come through for other people when their demands might otherwise seem unbearable. This is religion's most glorious contribution to family life—and to democracy and capitalism.

Where Does America's Goodness Come From?

The following is condensed from a speech by George M. Docherty that was entered into the Congressional Record *on March 8, 1954, and reprinted by Rabbi Daniel Lapin in his recent book* America's Real War.

I recall once discussing the "American way of life" with a newspaper editor. He had been using the phrase rather freely. When asked to define the phrase "the American way of life," he became rather wordy and verbose. "It is live and let live; it is freedom to act," and other such platitudes....

But it is deeper than that. And where did it all come from?

It has been with us so long, we have to recall it was brought here by people who laid stress on fundamentals. These fundamental concepts of life had been given to the world from Sinai, where the moral law was graven upon tables of stone, symbolizing the universal application to all men; and they came from the New Testament, where they were heard in the words of Jesus of Nazareth....

Some might assert this to be a violation of the First Amendment of the Constitution. It is quite the opposite. The First Amendment states: "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion."

Now "establishment of religion" is a technical term. It means Congress will permit no state church in this land such as exists in England. In England the bishops are appointed by Her Majesty. The church, by law, is supported by tithes or rent.... What this declaration says, in effect, is that no state church shall exist in this land. This is separation of church and state; it is not, and never was meant to be, a separation of religion and life.

One of the glories of this land is that it opened its gates to all men of every religious faith.... There is no religious examination on entering the United States of America—no persecution because a man's faith differs even from the Christian religion. Yet we are a nation "under God," to include the great Jewish community, and the people of Moslem faith, and the myriad of denominations of Christians in the land.

What then of the honest atheist? ...This age has thrown up a new type of man—we call him secular. He does not believe in God *not* because he is a wicked man, but because he is dialectically honest, and would rather walk with the unbelievers than sit hypocritically with people of faith. These men, and many have I known, are fine in character, and in the obligations as citizens and good neighbors, quite excellent.

But they really are spiritual parasites. And I mean no term of abuse in this. I'm simply classifying them. A parasite is an organism that lives upon the life force of another organism without contributing to the life of the other. These excellent ethical seculars are living upon the accumulated spiritual capital of Judeo-Christian civilization....

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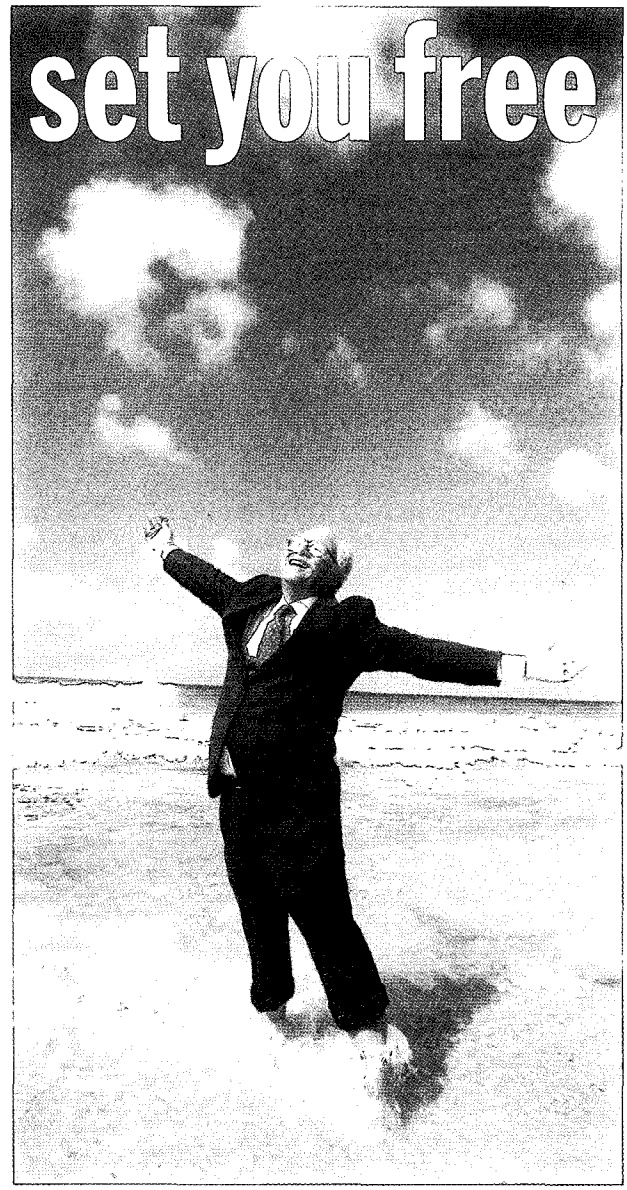

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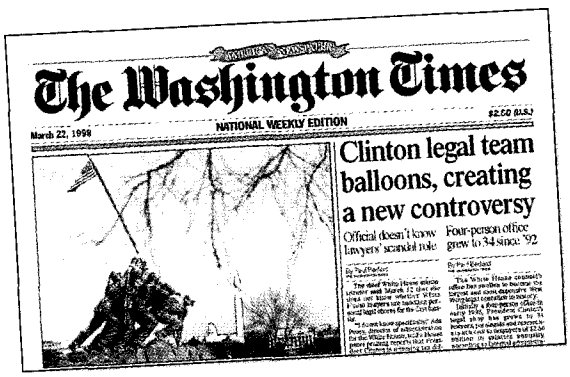
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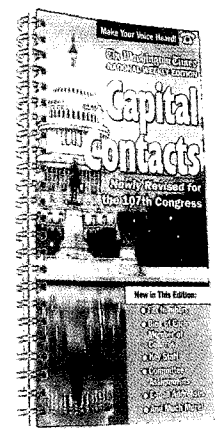

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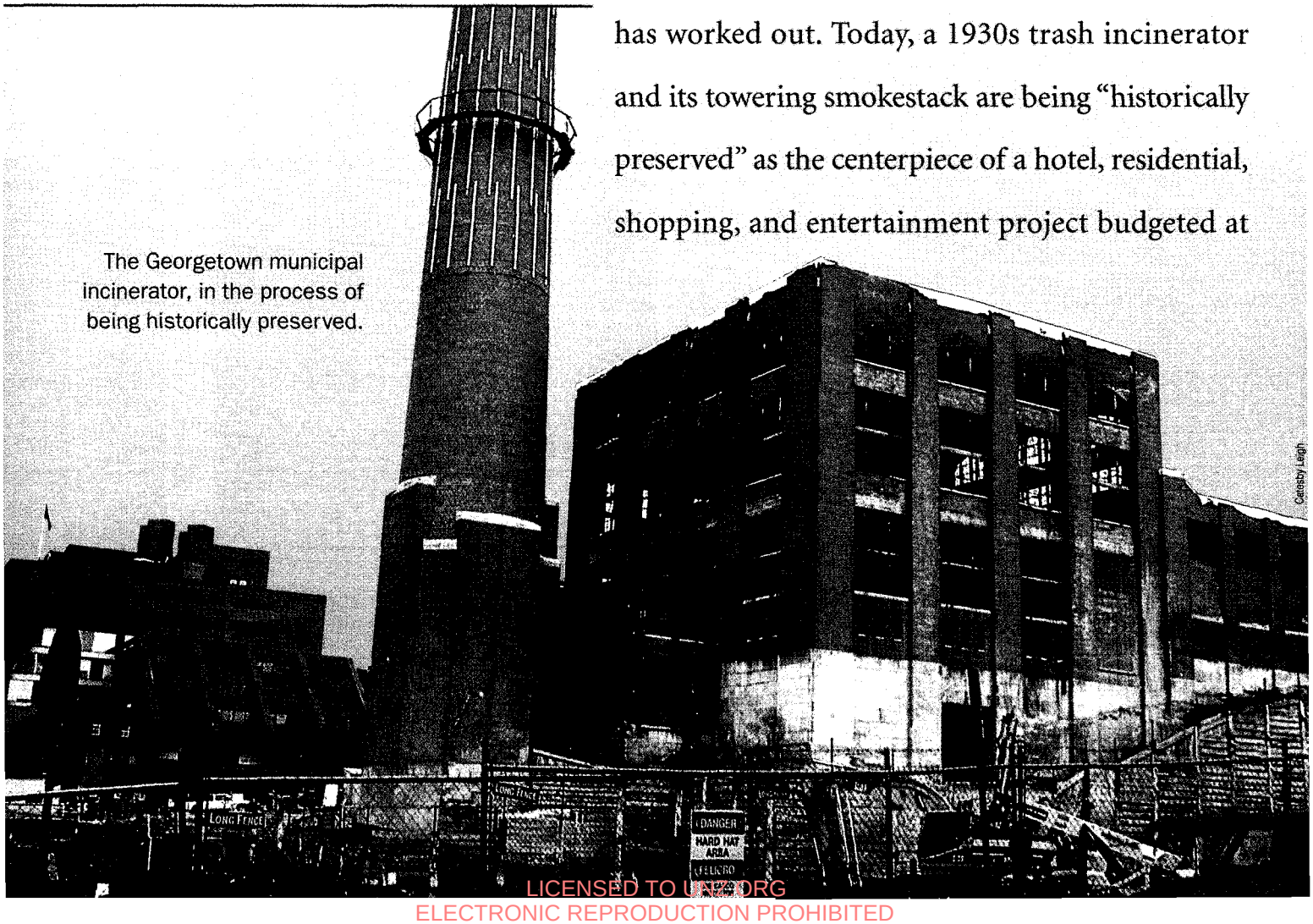
Historic Preservation goes Awry

by Catesby Leigh

When Congress passed a historic preservation law for the Georgetown section of Washington, D.C., it was explicitly intended to protect handsome buildings erected in the city's "early years"-meaning the late 1700s and early 1800s. That's not quite how it has worked out. Today, a 1930s trash incinerator and its towering smokestack are being "historically preserved" as the centerpiece of a hotel, residential, shopping, and entertainment project budgeted at



The Georgetown municipal incinerator, in the process of being historically preserved.

Catesby Leigh

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Catesby Leigh

$160 million and counting. The boxy brick incinerator is located near Georgetown's Potomac River waterfront. Beautiful it ain't. Yet the city's historic preservation board has categorized the incinerator and its smokestack as as a "contributing element" of Georgetown's historic character. So the developers have gone to enormous lengths to protect these useless industrial relics from the blasting and excavation needed to build underground parking and a 14-screen multiplex theater.

The architectural scheme for the surrounding 600,000-square-foot project calls for replicating the incinerator's contours. The result is an unappealing agglomeration variously clad in brick, stone, and glass. The project also includes three undistinguished nineteenth-century houses on the site, adding to the visual clutter but serving to keep the preservationist bureaucracy happy. The incinerator will house the hotel's reception area, restaurant, and a couple of meeting rooms. The smokestack's lower portion may serve as a wine cellar, while providing diversion for people lining up for tickets and popcorn in the multiplex's lobby.

The Georgetown Incinerator Project, as it is fetchingly dubbed, is but one indication that historic preservation in America has gone seriously awry. Preservationists seem increasingly incapable of separating the wheat from the chaff.

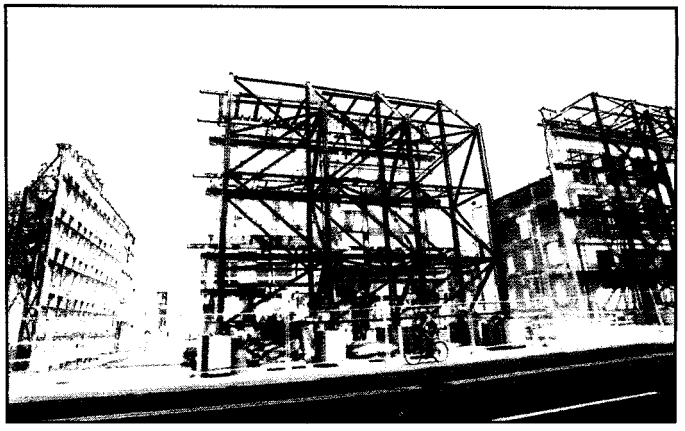
The preservationist impulse wasn't born yesterday. When the great poet Petrarch returned to his hometown of Arezzo, in central Italy, he was touched that the local authorities had decreed no change should be made to the house where he was born. The year was 1350.

The modern preservation movement's roots lie in the estimable desire to maintain buildings and sites that have extraordinary significance for various reasons: Either they are associated with great men and women or great events (as with George Washington's Mount Vernon home, Civil War battlefields, or the immigration facilities on Ellis Island); or they have archaeological importance (as with the pre-Columbian Casa Grande ruins in Arizona); or they are architecturally distinguished (as in the case of Manhattan's Grand Central Station). In recent years, though, preservationists have wandered into much murkier waters.

Political correctness is often a factor. Thus the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village, a dark little dive, has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places because it is a gay bar associated with the cause of homosexual rights, since its clientele rioted during a police raid in 1969.

Yet preservation's problems run deeper than politics. With increasing frequency, preservationists fail to make the sometimes difficult but always necessary distinction between what is of historic importance and what is merely old. The term "historic" implies a demanding standard. Leaving aside sites of major archeological significance, a building or place specially designated "historic" should somehow be intertwined with our highest ideals. A place like Grand Central qualifies because its beauty and magnificence are emotionally linked to noble aspirations.

TAE *contributing writer Catesby Leigh is a Washington, D.C.-based architectural critic.*



Facadism Nothing but the outermost skin of these historic buildings survives the "preservation" process. A civilization more confident of its ability to produce great new architecture in enduring traditional styles would have knocked it all down and started over.

The problem with current preservationist philosophy is that many of its exponents, like most of America's cultural elite, have abandoned the idealism long characteristic of Western civilization, an idealism which nurtured enduring conventions in art along with enduring truths in human affairs. This idealism has been supplanted by a relativism which leads preservationists down a slippery slope. If a gorgeous classical performing arts center in Providence, Rhode Island is worthy of preservation, then why not a modernist Denver convention hall that might have been designed by Darth Vader?

Indeed, James Marston Fitch, the late founder of Columbia University's historic preservation program, championed a "growing concern for preserving all aspects of material culture." This documentary ethos sucks the significance right out of the word "historic."

Similarly, a pamphlet published by the Historic Preservation Commission in Montgomery County, Maryland, declares that "At its most basic level, historic preservation reminds us of the way our lives have changed over the years." This sociological orientation led the National Trust for Historic Preservation to put the last remaining original McDonald's on its annual list of America's most endangered "historic" places. What's historic about that edifice? Why preserve it? There would surely be plenty of photographs for interested parties.

Such thinking led the Denver office of the National Trust to campaign in vain for saving Currigan Hall, a convention center erected in 1969 that was slated for replacement. Currigan's rusted exterior steel panels enclosed a 100,000-square-foot, column-free floor beneath an overhead steel frame. Like many modernist buildings, Currigan was an ugly contraption, not a civic treasure. And it was not popular. The preservationists' main argument for saving Currigan from the scrap-heap—they urged it be moved to a new site—was the fact that, when built, it boasted the world's largest rigid space frame. The space frame, observed Jim Lindberg of the National Trust, "sets the building in its time very well." So what?

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Catesby Leigh

Why bother? A stately century-old Washington townhouse (behind scaffolding) has been "preserved" in a shell of modernist clutter.

There is one thing to be said about such elastic notions of historic significance: They greatly broaden job opportunities for preservationists. Michael Tomlan, director of Cornell's graduate program in historic preservation, calls for preservationists to move beyond the great house and the historic tar-paper shack and add "the split level and ranch house" to their protected rosters. Writing in *Forum Journal*, published by the National Trust, Tomlan asks, "Why shouldn't sports facilities be of interest? Concern for diners, drive-ins, and bus terminals has already given way to airports and truck stops, and even shipping container ports. This is appropriate, and spells a bright future for preservation graduates."

This sounds like some bureaucrat's tawdry vision of turf-expansion. After all, once those truck stops and container ports are deemed historic, they will need to be "documented." Then bottled in one form of preservationist formaldehyde or other. Then "professionally interpreted" for visitors willing to revisit life at its most mundane.

Some preservationists recognize that this kind of thinking leads to trouble. But they are hard pressed to offer an alternative—because advocates like Tomlan are simply taking the cultural relativism that saturates their movement to its logical conclusion. Indeed, preservationist buzzwords like "cultural landscapes" and "intangible heritage" suggest that the curatorial impulse, in theory at least, knows no boundaries. Employing the broadest, most meaningless, and most pretentiously anthropological interpretations of what is worth saving, academics are redefining the value of buildings according to strikingly arbitrary criteria.

So far as architectural aesthetics are concerned, the preservationist notion of "walking through history" leads to the fallacy that the traditional architectural styles which have given us our most beautiful buildings are now buried in the past. So when Denver made "landmarks" of dozens of older, traditionally designed buildings in its central downtown district recently, the preservationists were not about to suggest that these edifices set standards for future downtown buildings. The classic structures merely promote "the special sense of past time and place."

Indeed, the long-term vision espoused by preservationists and an influential business group, the Downtown Denver Partnership, is of the city's central downtown district as an architectural museum whose specimens testify not to enduring artistic norms, but to an aimless process of cultural evolution. Disappointment over the loss of Currigan Hall, meanwhile, has been salved by the preservation of a dismal city office building—a 1950s international-style horizontal box—that could have and should have been put out of its misery as part of a new construction project.

The confusion in preservationist ranks is all but written in stone, thanks to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. First issued in 1976, the Standards have largely shaped preservation activity since. In order to qualify for federal tax credits, rehabilitation of "historic" properties must adhere to the Standards, which have been incorporated into local design review guidelines across the land.

The Standards decree that each historic property "shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use." Thus the Georgetown trash incinerator is saved, apparently to remind us what a gritty industrial waterfront looked like in earlier days. I suggest such documentary evidence belongs in a book. The incinerator has nothing to do with Georgetown's essential character. Its demolition should have been a matter of course as the riverfront area was improved.

One of the Standards' most harmful stipulations is that any addition to a rehabilitated edifice must be readily recognizable as historically distinct, in order to avoid unscientific confusion with the original. This is absurd. Let's say an architect adds a couple of stories to an elegant 1890s hotel in converting it into a luxury apartment residence. The architect designs a seamless addition that contributes to the building's aesthetic appeal. Most of us would say hooray. But the architect can forget about a federal tax credit. He has sinned against preservationist orthodoxy. He has "faked history."

Of course, if the architect had done precisely the same thing back in the 1930s, his addition would be regarded as part and parcel of the building's historic character. But today, he must tack on an obviously modernist glass wall or some other sort of unharmoniously "contemporary" appendage. (See photos above and to right.)

The lesson is that when you strip a humanistic discipline like architecture of its fundamental concern with beauty and substitute a commitment to fashionable theories, you get ugliness. For modernists, however, it is a godsend that preservationists have lost sight of timeless esthetic standards. Preservationists increasingly subscribe to the silly credo that for a modern building to be "authentic," it must be modernist. Resorting to great classical or Gothic precedents can only lead to "faked history."

Such foolishness explains why residents of the Woodley Park neighborhood in northwest Washington, D.C., recently saw their historic-district status backfire. A high-profile development project involved incorporating a turn-of-the-century townhouse designed in the French classical manner into a new office-retail building. Neighborhood residents strongly pre-

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ferred the new architecture to be traditional. The District's historic preservation board, however, along with the federal government's Commission of Fine Arts, signed off on an unpopular and unattractive modernist scheme. Though the new construction lacked the original building's graceful proportions and handsome ornamental detail, it was more "authentic" according to current preservationist orthodoxy. As a result, that fine old townhouse was not preserved so much as submerged in low-grade construction.

Ironically, it was widespread hostility to modernism that made preservation a major cultural phenomenon in the first place. The proximate cause was the demolition in 1963 of Manhattan's Pennsylvania Station, Charles Follen McKim's classical masterpiece, and its replacement with a dismal specimen of "urban renewal."

Unfortunately, professional preservationists, like architectural historians in general, seem increasingly disinterested in what made buildings like the old Penn Station inspire passersby. In a colloquium published in the National Trust's *Preservation* magazine, Columbia preservationist Fitch advanced the thesis that "there are inherent contradictions in trying to make pre-industrial handicraft modes of building a paradigm for the architecture of a technologically advanced age." Other enemies of traditional architectural styles love to dismiss them as "imitative" or "derivative."

By such standards, the beloved Penn Station was a titanic cultural no-no. Dedicated in 1910, McKim's masterpiece was indeed derived, in part, from earlier examples-its magnificent General Waiting Room was modeled on the decidedly pre-industrial Baths of Caracalla in Rome. The monstrosity that took Penn Station's place, on the other hand, was designed in a thoroughly "contemporary," industrialized idiom.

But the old Penn Station successfully integrated classical architecture and its decorative arts and crafts with new steel-frame construction methods. Unlike trendy modernist architects, McKim did not seek to incarnate the Spirit of the Age at Penn Station. He was not remotely interested in building a machine-for-catching-a-train-in. Like other great architects, he reached back across space and time to the greatest achievements in the annals of design. And his end result, with the idealistic understanding of art it reflected, served to enrich the lives of millions.

For modernist critics like Herbert Muschamp of the *New York Times*, a return to the traditional design epitomized by Penn Station and Grand Central could only serve "to reinforce compliance with outmoded social norms." The relativists try to bury the obvious fact that the great building traditions offer beauty, while modernist architecture routinely serves up ugliness. The ignorant public, they moan, does not "understand" modernist architecture. But a building that needs to be "understood" in an intellectual sense is, in all likelihood, artistically dead on arrival.

Current preservationist orthodoxy offers no antidote to this situation. Worse yet, it scorns contemporary architects who, like McKim, resort to historic precedents in designing new buildings. The town planners, for example, take their cues from Andrés Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, who are trying to encourage pedestrian-scale, traditionally styled neighborhoods that defined American communities from colonial times until the 1930s. The idealism inherent in Duany and Plater-Zyberk's reliance on historic precedent is simply lost on trendy pundits. For those afflicted with the relativist plague, such reliance on the wisdom of the past can only be a matter of "nostalgia."

The truth is, a great many cherished "historic" districts across our land are just decent neighborhoods that happen to have been built before World War II. Preservationists deserve our gratitude for rescuing any number of these places from destruction at the hands of urban renewers and highway engineers. The National Trust, moreover, deserves special recognition for helping revive hundreds of neglected Main Streets, while spreading the word about their economic potential.

But when it comes to the ongoing dearth of satisfying new architecture, the preservation movement is part of the problem rather than the solution. Were it not for the modernist superstitions afflicting architects and preservationists alike, we would knock old buildings down when they no longer suited our needs, sometimes even very fine buildings like that classical townhouse in Woodley Park would go because we would be confident that we could replace them with something just as good or even better.

Deciding what to save in our built environment is important. But what we build from scratch is of infinitely greater importance. To the extent preservationists have convinced themselves that America is just one big museum of "material culture," where "authenticity" matters more than beauty, and where traditional architecture is outdated and at odds with the modern condition, they are helping make America uglier.

We must rebuild our confidence in our civilization's ability to produce great architecture. Thanks to planners like Duany and Plater-Zyberk, plus a new generation of classical architects on the way up, and the public's strong instinctual preference for traditional buildings, we have an opportunity to bring new life to American design. But we have a long way to go.

Catesby Leigh

Orphaned The building housing the Mexican Embassy in Washington, D.C. jarringly illustrates the perniciousness of rules that require additions to historic structures to be in a contrasting style.

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To mark the confluence of Father's Day and America's 225th birthday, we offer this light, sweet, melancholy…

Patriotic Ramble

David Gothard

By Matthew Stevenson

During several childhood springtimes in the 1960s, I boarded the train with my father in New York and arrived some hours later among the flowering dogwoods of the Virginia countryside. Selling sugar to what he called "the trade," my father busied himself with meetings in factory boardrooms while I played or did homework in waiting areas. Some hours later another train would depart—for Richmond, Charlottesville, or Alexandria—and we would repeat the experience of mixing his business with my pleasure, sometimes making a detour to Mount Vernon or the battlefields around Fredericksburg, so that back in school I could explain something about early America, as well as about a Nabisco production line.

For the ten years that my four children have been growing up, we have lived in the Swiss countryside, outside Geneva. Our overseas life has been a success, although sometimes I worry that our children know too little of their family's homeland. So last winter, as if to recall those patriotic rambles of my youth, I started planning a family trip to Virginia. We would begin with a tour of the White House. We would end at colonial Williamsburg. In between we'd picnic along Bull Run and spend the day at Monticello. Or so I imagined as we planned our excursion over the family dinner table.

We began the grand tour in a line beside the White House fence. It was before eight in the morning, and because we had withdrawn VIP passes from the favor bank, I assumed that we might sweep to the front. Symbolic of America in 2000, however, everyone in this long line had VIP tickets. In our collective importance we inched forward in the rain and half-light until a Secret Service agent started us on our appointed rounds near the downstairs library.

I can't say that the gifts to the nation from Dolley Madison or Eleanor Roosevelt made much of an impression on the children, who fidgeted with the velvet ropes and yawned with jet lag over accounts of the War of 1812. But a public tour does make clear the extent to which the White House remains a work-in-progress, as changeable as its tenants' politics.

Lincoln called the White House "an unsuccessful hotel," and most turnovers of government have included a tag sale of many prize possessions of the previous occupants. Benjamin Harrison thought the White House was best suited as an American Louvre. The Theodore Roosevelts scattered pelts on the floors.

Before cascading out the main entrance, we stood in the front hall before a portrait of John F. Kennedy—arms folded, seemingly brooding about Cuban missiles. I told the children of seeing him in October 1963, a month before his assassination. Dedicating a library in Amherst, Massachusetts, he had come down the main street sitting on the back of an open convertible, a scene as innocent as a homecoming parade. My memoir was interrupted, however, by clamors from my young audience for Washington T-shirts.

We spent the rest of the day touring around the capital, following the station-wagon wheel ruts of countless earlier Americans. Other visitors were surely more successful than we were at finding parking, though, and heavy spring rains kept us from walking. So we darted from presidential memorials, to museums, to the *Spirit of St. Louis*—like Lindbergh, running ever lower on fuel and trying to make it across the ocean on five sandwiches.

The next morning we escaped the Washington beltway on a westbound Interstate. At Manassas, we put gas in the rental car and filled a plastic bag with root beer, cream

Matthew Stevenson, a former editor at Harper's Magazine, *is a banker in Switzerland.*

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soda, and other snacks of convenience. This was what remained of my Civil War picnic dream.

Ground soaked in blood, the battlefield at Bull Run survives as a peaceful demilitarized zone in the otherwise bumptious development wars of northern Virginia. High-speed country roads bisect parts of the national park, and every few years a builder threatens to envelop the picket lines with a strip mall or scatter-site housing. But the broad field around Henry Hill, where the Confederates broke the hollow squares of northern optimism, remains faithful to its 1861 moment in history.

Opposing rows of Union and Confederate cannon define the infantry ranks that stood almost at attention as the battle opened. In an augury of the war to come, the nineteenth-century fusillades cut gaps of twentieth-century proportions in the hastily-formed opposing armies. Union General Irvin McDowell thought he could win just by showing up with polished brass on his uniform. But the thousands of casualties taken early in the fighting broke the northern units, which then fled back to Washington.

As our two boys fantasized cannonballs in the air, I thought about the District of Columbia's unrequited romance with war. Many of those of who ended up in flight from Bull Run were affluent Washingtonians who had come out with their food baskets and parasols to watch the battle from nearby heights. Were the CNN wars of Iraq and Kosovo that played to Washington cocktail parties much different? At Bull Run, the sons of Washington were not well represented in the tattered regiments that did the actual fighting. The likes of Chester Arthur, Grover Cleveland, and J. P. Morgan, as well as the fathers of Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, all hired working-class substitutes to take their places on the rosters—a solution less complicated than an Oxford scholarship.

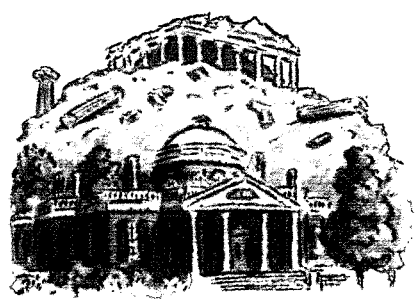
The drive between Manassas and Charlottesville is a hundred miles. One leaves the suburban front behind and traverses spectacular horse country along roads that dip and roll through Orange County. We paused briefly in Culpepper, but were too late to tour Montpelier, James Madison's plantation. At dusk we arrived in Charlottesville, home to the University of Virginia and Thomas Jefferson.

I had notions of staying at a colonial inn, where the themed entertainment would include the guests debating Constitutional questions. But since our plane landed we had seen mostly rain, and the children needed a forum in which to invest their back-seat energy. Thus we checked into a mock-Tudor motel with a murky indoor swimming pool and watched them ply the cloudy waters before dinner.

To my mind Monticello, Jefferson's home, is as close as America comes to Periclean Athens. It remains as I first saw it in the seventh grade, a Parthenon to the age of reason. Even if from some angles the building can look like a savings bank, it still has the Lewis and Clark maps of exploration in the front hall, some remarkable inventions, and a sense of having sheltered within its walls lives that embraced words, mathematical formulas, and concertos with equal ease.

Our tour covered Jefferson's heat-efficient bedroom, his scientific instruments, the writing table where he spent many hours each day, and the Revolutionary busts in the dining room. But nearly all the tour questions addressed the matter of Sally Hemmings, so my wife spent much of the tour whispering to the children the meaning of words like "affair," "DNA," and "scandal." No one wanted to hear about the library sent to Congress or the early drafts of the Declaration until we had cleared up how the back stairs led to the slave quarters. So what for me started as a morning at the *agora* ended in the audience of Jerry Springer.

Before leaving Charlottesville, I talked the household into a visit to Ash Lawn, the nearby house of James Monroe. But as the guide described his diplomatic expulsion from Madrid in 1805, I realized the Spaniards' treatment of Monroe was only slightly chillier than the reaction of our by now history-sated children to the mansion. We moved to lunch in the historic Michie Tavern—where everything from the waiters to the ale is supposed to bring Sam Adams to mind—ordering the "hearty midday fare" of fried chicken, biscuits, and pie. Alas, I managed to embarrass the children by drying my shoes and socks near the fire.



David Gothard

What started as a morning at the agora *ended in the audience of Jerry Springer.*

Next, we marched on Richmond. Everything about the state capital evokes the war between the states. We cruised Monument Avenue, with its bronze phalanx of the Confederate cause, and drove past the capitol, which Jefferson designed, and for control of which Grant bled his armies at Cold Harbor and Petersburg.

I told the children about Lincoln's anonymous visit to Richmond after its surrender in April 1865. His carriage rolled past still-smoldering ruins, past the houses of General Pickett and General Lee (where Mrs. Lee remained). Lincoln even swiveled playfully in the desk chair abandoned by Jefferson Davis just 40 hours earlier.

I could have lingered among the dogwoods, to smell the petals of my childhood visits. And I dropped hints about swinging past the Edgar Allan Poe Museum. But as the weather the next morning was gloomier than the House of Usher, we pushed toward Williamsburg.

On the way, we decided first to visit the scene of the battlefield at Yorktown. It proved to be a strategic reckoning as foolish as that of British General Cornwallis. Detached from my supply lines, I turned the car into something called the Yorktown Victory Center. All I had wanted was to glimpse the trenches of the Revolution's last battle and then find lunch.

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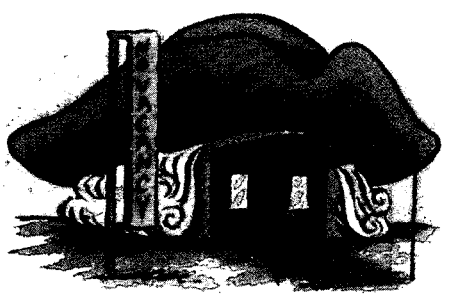
What we encountered, however, was a stockade of gifts shops, organic farm animals, time-lines to the Revolution, and an "Adult Resource Room." As the Victory Center admission cost us $75, we felt obliged, as well, to pause reflectively at the Powhatan Indian dance circle.

By the time we reached the actual battlefield, not many in the car were keen to follow the "tour tape" I had purchased in the gift shop. We did stand atop the inner trenches, where a British march of folly, plus the assistance of French soldiers, cannon, and ships, allowed the American colonies to break away with finality. Prior to the surrender of Cornwallis, General Washington had lost nearly all his encounters with the British (having been absent from the triumph at Saratoga). Washington was crushed at the battle of Long Island, beaten at Brandywine, and crossed the Hudson in flight. But at Yorktown, he and his French allies cut off the redcoats as they ran short of supplies. The surrendering English marched from their earthworks to the tune of "The World Turned Upside Down," and Washington was spared from ending his career as a colonel.

In Williamsburg, even the club sandwiches are named after revolutionary heroes, so I was not surprised that our motel was called the Patrick Henry Best Western Inn. It had the virtue of proximity to the historic district, where the cost of admission tickets for a family of six feels as unjust as the Stamp Act. Our boys drilled with the Minutemen, and the girls dressed for colonial games and chores. At the House of Burgesses, the presence of Jefferson and Patrick Henry—the patriot, not the motelier—hung in the air. Harvard and Yale were denounced as "seminaries of despotism." We cheered the delegates who departed for the Continental Congress, and only a silversmith exhibition at 5 p.m. kept us from tarring and feathering some wayward British tourists who dared to defend the King's own. A printer went on trial under the Alien and Sedition Acts, but we returned an innocent verdict in less time than it took to free O.J.



It was for the shores of Tripoli that we came to visit Williamsburg.

It was, however, as much for the shores of Tripoli as for the colonial street theater that we came to Williamsburg. My father was there to attend a reunion of his World War II Marine Corps rifle company. In addition to wanting to show my children eighteenth-century America, I wanted also to travel again with my father through the landscapes of memory.

About 25 men in their seventies and eighties, along with wives, children, and grandchildren, gathered for the sometimes somber reminiscence. In a town overflowing with admiration for the courage of Minutemen, not one tourist in a hundred would have mistaken the older men sitting on motel sofas with the assault forces who cleared the Pacific of the Japanese empire. A few in the group wore Marine Corps caps or lapel pins, and a company flag of the Fleet Marine Force hung in the suite where we met. But these were not martial enthusiasts. Battle "was a miserable common experience," as one Marine put it, and when the survivors faithfully get together each year it is to pay homage to what Melville called "the cannibal god of war."

No company was overseas longer than C Company of the First Marine Regiment, commanded by my father, which fought the first American offensive action of World War II in August 1942 (with bayonets on Guadalcanal), as well as the last action of the war (among the flamed-out caves of Okinawa) in June 1945. At one point in between, the company of 230 men was reduced to several officers and 12 men. No company earned more Congressional Medals of Honor in World War II.

The men of C Company had done their jobs, survived, and moved on with their lives, for which they were grateful. I tried tape recording some war stories, but found I could capture only incomplete fragments on the reels. ("These men just win the wars, they don't have to figure them out," observed one historian.) Occasionally some of the men would stop me in the motel corridor, make the connection between my father and me, and state in a short, declarative sentence something like: "You know, your dad saved my life."

On the last evening there was a banquet. Everyone present said a few words: about the pleasure of seeing new or familiar faces, on their lives since the last gathering, of lingering regrets from the war or memories of buddies killed in the shadows of Shuri Castle or Bloody Nose Ridge. Across the street, war was part of the glorious Revolution; here, the bloody shirt had yet to dry.

David Gothard

After breakfast the next morning, we packed the rental car and drove north through Virginia for our flight to Europe. Even on an interstate, it is inspiring to cross the Rapidan, Chickahominy, Rappahannock, and other streams that flow through the American imagination. As we needed a rest stop, I chose Chancellorsville, having never seen the place of Stonewall Jackson's hour of triumph and death.

I might have lingered in the book store or set out on the walking tour, to see where Jackson's own men cut down their last best hope for victory in a fog of war and thick forest. But I had lost my audience. We had spent too much time in the rain and the car, and sedition was in the air. The children refused to budge from their seats, and my wife's thoughts had switched to our European lives.

Near Washington we dropped my parents for a northbound Amtrak express, the faint whistle of my boyhood trains. The roads near Dulles Airport were gridlocked, and the size of the suburban houses made me think America has become a nation of great Gatsbys. With the skies still gray as we boarded our jet, I wondered if 35 years hence any of the children would lead their own families on a forced march across the Potomac, in the pursuit of happiness or maybe just a few souvenirs?

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What Great Books Do For Children

In his new memoir A Life in the 20th Century, *historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. discusses how he became a reader early in life, and why classic children's literature is valuable.*

I particularly remember my mother sitting in her chair reading aloud to her children. She was a splendid reader, spirited and expressive, and Tom and I insisted that she keep on reading to us long after we were able to read to ourselves. She was also an astute skip-er. I recall her amusement at my indignation when I discovered that, in books like *Ivanhoe* and Parkman's *Conspiracy of Pontiac*, she was unscrupulously omitting passages she found static or boring.

Of all childhood pastimes, reading was my passion. Now that television has replaced the book in the life of the young, mine may have been the last generation to grow up in the high noon of the print culture. Perhaps it may be of historical interest to recall the profound excitement, the abiding fulfillment, books provided in those ancient and no doubt unimaginable days.

My mother gave me an appetite for books as well as a capacity to read them quickly. "Perhaps it is only in childhood that books have any deep influence on our lives," Graham Greene has well said. "...In childhood all books are books of divination, telling us about the future ...What do we ever get nowadays from reading to equal the excitement and the revelation of those first fourteen years?" [Indeed] most people will have done most of the reading they will ever do by the age of 25 and must live off those books for the rest of their lives.

My mother began with fairy tales, the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen, with Greek and Roman mythology, especially as marvelously rendered by Hawthorne in *The Wonder Book* and *Tanglewood Tales*; and with the wondrous *Arabian Nights*. When I began to read for myself, a six-volume series called *My Book House* came into my life, an entrancing and resplendently illustrated anthology of historical adventure, fairy tale, poetry, mythology, something for every mood and moment.

I fear that such an initiation into a larger world would be much condemned today. For these were all tales filled with cruelty and violence, mutilation and murder, magic and fantasy, streaked by what is now seen as classism, sexism, racism, and superstition. Approved children's books today are by contrast didactic in intent, dealing with prosaic, everyday events and intended to improve relations among classes, sexes, and races. Such books, it is argued, lead children to face reality rather than to flee into fantasy.

Is this really so? [Aren't] fairy tales and myths symbolic reenactments of deep psychological and social dilemmas? In this sense, the classic fantasies may well be more realistic than the contemporary morality tales.

There is nothing new about the contemporary insistence on morality tales. Since the invention of type, most children's books have been designed to make children behave better. Yet good-behavior tales do not survive, and gods and goddesses, dragons and ogres, are with us still. Hawthorne in his day felt the pressures of moralistic didacticism. "These old legends, so brimming over with everything that is most abhorrent to our Christianized moral sense," he wrote ironically in his introduction to *Tanglewood Tales*, "How were they to be purified?... The author has not always thought it necessary to write downward in order to meet the comprehension of children....Children possess an underestimated sensibility to whatever is deep or high, in imagination or feeling."

Childhood is finite. So is the number of books one can read. Why spend time on a modern morality tale in which the girl plays doctor and the boy plays nurse and their patient is the black child down the block when you can read about Huck and Tom and Nigger Jim? The serious point of children's books is not to improve behavior but to expand imagination. Great children's literature creates new worlds that children enter with delight and perhaps with apprehension and from which they return with understandings that their own experience could not have produced and that give their lives new meaning.

The classical tales have populated the common imagination of the West. They are voyages of discovery. They introduce children to the existential mysteries—the anxiety of loneliness, the terror of rejection, the need for comradeship, the quest for fulfillment, the struggle against fate, victory, love, death. "Small children," Henry James observed in his preface to *What Maisie Knew*, "have many more perceptions than they have terms to translate them." The classical tales tell children what they unconsciously know—that human nature is not innately good, that conflict is real, that life is harsh before it is happy—and thereby reassure them about their own fears and their own sense of self.

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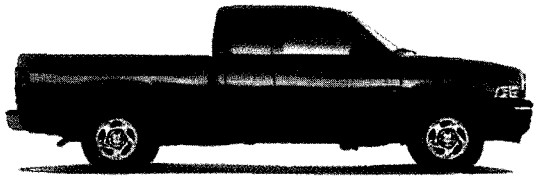
In Real Life

First-person America



My Cherry Red

By Blake Hurst

TARKIO, MISSOURI—It is red, with lots of chrome. It is so tall I had to spend $250 to have a step installed so I could climb into the cab. It has 6 gears and a 240 horsepower Cummins diesel engine that will pull a 24-foot trailer at 80 miles an hour for over 400 miles without stopping. I know that because I've traversed Nebraska on I-80 with my new behemoth, which is not an experience for the weak-kneed. For those of you who think that 80 miles per hour is a little fast, understand that on the plains of Nebraska, you do 80 or get run over. The CD player has better sound than any home system we own, and I find myself playing it as loud as any 16-year-old with a boom box. I am, of course, a little embarrassed by all this, but I must admit that my new Dodge pickup truck has brought me a great deal of pleasure.

It replaced a Dodge pickup with 190,000 miles, a torn front seat, a front bumper held on with baling wire and no radio at all. I kept the old pickup for two reasons. One, it is still mechanically sound, and, two, Julie won't let me drive the new one over our farm.

A week or two into harvest, I had to admit she had a point. I hit a particularly nasty bump when trying to balance a cup of coffee and my cellphone, while dodging shrapnel from the seat and dash. Thermoses were flying, a biography of John Marshall I borrowed from my brother two years ago and still haven't finished was sliding to the floor, at least three days of newspapers were fluttering in the breeze, and I had a particularly nasty scrape with a flying crescent wrench. All the while coughing and sneezing because during soybean harvest everything is coated with a thick layer of bean dust, which, as a result of my bouncing, was becoming airborne in a noxious cloud. It is not a fault of mine to be overly careful with my possessions, at least until the "new" wears off. I want to avoid this kind of abuse of my latest purchase. After all, it cost more than the profits from my first two years of farming.

Still, my pickup has experienced the bumps and bruises of everyday life here on Hurst Farms. Once, years ago, we had a truck tarp installed on a grain truck. The fellow who put the tarp on used a picture of our vehicle in his advertising for years. I had more than one neighbor comment that he had done so because "everybody knew" that, to coin a phrase, if it could make it on the Hurst Farms, it could make it anywhere.

This time, within a week of bringing my new pickup home, my wife came running into the house, announcing in the portentous tones which only wives are capable of, that we had a problem, and I had better come quickly. The new truck had been parked outside of my office the previous evening, with its plant-hauling trailer attached, but when I came around the corner that morning, it was gone. It wasn't hard to find though. You could track it by the huge plume of highly flammable propane gas boiling up at the end of the driveway. The truck had rolled the length of a football field, collided with a thousand-gallon tank of propane, knocked the tank off its moorings, and severed the copper line that attached the tank to the greenhouse heater it supplied. Gas was spewing, my new truck had lost its virginity, and it was all rather tense until the propane valve was shut off.

Fourteen-year-old boys are not noted for hiding their emotions, so it was easy to discover the cause of the roaming Dodge as soon as I saw Ben's face. Like all boys his age, he is ready to drive, and had been doing a little practicing with my new pickup, shifting gears while no doubt supplying motor noises and imagining adolescent girls wilting in his wake. But he neglected to set the brake at the end of his session. A lesson well learned—we can't get in a vehicle now without releasing the parking brake, because Ben spends his evenings setting the brakes on each of our cars and trucks.

I am a conservative in every sense of the word, and I know that man should not be a slave to his possessions, that material things matter little in the long run, and that the kind of vehicle one drives has absolutely no correlation to a life well-lived. I grew up working with a grandfather who never threw away anything. I spent weeks straightening used nails and rolling up rusty barbwire. In fact, we once spent a few days rolling up some barbwire so rotten with age that it broke at the touch. I asked Grandpa how old it was, and he said he didn't know, because it was second-hand when he built the fence in 1931. So, this sinful pride in my ostentatious conveyance is decidedly out of character.

But I'm getting ready to leave for a trip to a neighboring town, and I admit I'm going to enjoy hearing that diesel rattle while Merle Haggard wails, and I survey my domain from the seat of my cherry red pickup.

TAE *contributing writer Blake Hurst never drives 80 outside of Nebraska.*

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the Japan Economist

The Death of Japanese Industrial Policy

In the London Review of Books, *economic journalist Murray Sayle (who has lived in Japan since 1975) recounts the collapse of Japan's government/corporate business partnership—which a decade ago U.S. liberals were insisting would dash American-style laissez-faire economics. A condensation:*

It is nearly ten years since Japan was about to take over the known world. Then it showed ominous signs of faltering. Japan came third to last in the OECD's table of industrialized nations' growth for 1999, ahead of Turkey and the Czech Republic. The OECD predicts that when the final figures for 2000 are in, Japan will be at the bottom of the table with 1.9 percent, well behind Britain (3 percent), and the U.S. (5.2 percent).

Japan's "lost decade" has just seen the greatest Keynesian pump-priming operation in history produce only a disheartening dribble. Living entirely on performance-enhancing drugs, the Japanese economy still only manages to limp in last. The Japanese Finance Ministry estimates that in the financial year to March 2001, central and local government debt will exceed 140 per cent of GDP. The world's second largest economy will, in other words, have laid out almost a year and a half's income. On what? Not on housing, urban transport, parks, schools, and libraries, in all of which Japan trails behind most OECD members.

The government's colossal borrowings have gone to bail out banks, to build barely used tunnels, bridges that go nowhere, duplicate lines for the bullet train, and dams that serve no discernible purpose. The gleaming 512-foot monster that towers over our local trout stream, for instance, barely generates enough electricity to run its own lavish PR show, much less to light the mountain village where I live, or earn anything to repay the four billion dollars it has cost. Sixty-five per cent of the government's revenue is required to service debt. Just to stabilise Japan's ballooning national debt at 150 per cent of GDP by 2005 would involve raising taxes or cutting spending by 11 per cent of GDP—or half a trillion dollars—thus instantly plunging Japan and probably the world into depression. No major economy has ever run up such an extraordinary peace-time debt, or had so few ideas about how to ease its burden.

The Nikkei Index lost a quarter of its value in 2000. Household spending was down 2 percent for the year, and Tokyo prices down an unheard-of 1 per cent, as shopkeepers competed for shrinking business. Unemployment touched 4.8 per cent at the end of the year, a whisker below the record 4.9 per cent posted in March—a hiccup by European standards, but ominous in a Confucian society in which work is the purpose of life, and those without jobs are resentful nonpersons. The cardboard shelters of the Tokyo homeless are well out of sight, and open begging is unknown in Japan, but the old and not-so-old unemployed practice the respectable equivalent: hawking neatly folded newspapers and magazines retrieved from rubbish bins. Meanwhile, Japanese households collectively possess the biggest pool of idle capital in the world, the equivalent of $13.7 trillion, much of which is deposited in savings accounts at local post offices, paying a measly 0.8 percent interest.

Tokyo property prices, meanwhile, are edging down—which, together with the plummeting stock market, threatens to uncover fresh layers of bad debt and capital inadequacy in the banking system. The government has responded with a plan to divert part of its postal savings fund into the stock market: The Treasury, in other words, will not only spend people's savings for them on make-work projects, but play the stock market for them, a twist that didn't occur to Keynes. Capitalism in its Japanese form is falling apart—I'm quoting Koichi Kato, an elder of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. A steady-state capitalism in which markets, technology, and productivity all stagnate is hard to imagine—although present-day Japan may be coming close.

Japan's demographic plight is close to calamitous, as adverse now as it was favorable to growth in the 1960s. On the latest figures, Japanese women are bearing 1.4 babies each, far below the replacement level of 2.1 children per couple. Low fertility and long lives have built a top-heavy age pyramid, growing ever more cumbersome. Elderly voters resist change, and hoard their savings unproductively in the local post office.

Japan's geographical frontier is now closed. Many once promising markets—Africa, parts of Latin America, and Central Asia—are now inaccessible because of poverty or strife. Where they are still open, Chinese, Korean, and even Vietnamese competitors have arrived, offering the low-cost textiles, basic cars, and cheap electronics on which Japan's earlier growth was built. There is now a world glut in shipbuilding, in cars and trucks, in steel for trains—and most of the excess capacity is Japanese.

The technological frontier is, as ever, trickier to read, but there are many signs that Japan is not on it. The high-tech (and anti-competitive) consortia organized by Japanese bureaucrats in the

continued on page 31

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Flashback

To know nothing of what happened before you were born is to remain ever a child—Cicero

Salem: The Case for the Prosecution

As she stood before the gallows at Salem, condemned witch Sarah Good pronounced one of the most famous of American curses. "I am no more a witch than you are a wizard," she snarled at her most persistent persecutor, Reverend Nicholas Noyes, "and if you take away my life, God will give you blood to drink."

The noose tightened, Good was dispatched (hellward?), and Noyes died 25 years later by choking to death...on his own blood. Nathaniel Hawthorne, a descendant of John Hathorne, the grim magistrate who examined Good and found her Bad, made art of Good's imprecation in *The House of the Seven Gables.* And the curse of Salem endures to this day, as innocent American high-school students are annually tormented by Arthur Miller's inevitably assigned schlock drama of Salem, *The Crucible.* Oh, give me the gibbet!

It is not surprising that a man who married Marilyn Monroe reduced Salem to a cartoon allegory against the buffoonish Joe McCarthy; to Miller, the executions of 20 men and women were merely examples of "human sacrifice to the furies of fanaticism and paranoia." Miller's take on Salem is probably the most common view, though academic adventurers have also blamed the witch trials on Puritan sexual repression, the social conflict between merchant and farmer, and plain old malice.

Still, the question persists: Why in 1692 did the good people and learned clergy of Salem go berserkly on a witch hunt? Not until 1969 did a thoroughly respectable scholar, Chadwick Hansen, advance the startling thesis: *Because Salem had witches!*

Brazenly, Hansen demolished the pillars of the Salem myth, in particular the beliefs that "no witchcraft was practiced at Salem," "the behavior of the afflicted persons was fraudulent," and "the executions were unique in Western civilization, and therefore monstrous and attributable to some narrowness of fanaticism or repressiveness peculiar to Puritans."

To the contrary, Hansen demonstrated, witchcraft was practiced widely in seventeenth-century New England and throughout the world. No eye-of-newt occultist, Hansen nevertheless argued that "in a society which *believes* in witchcraft, it works. If you believe in witchcraft and you discover that someone has been melting your wax image over a slow fire...the probability is that you will get extremely sick." Thus the gruesome contortions and fits and Robin Williams routines of the afflicted girls at Salem were the result of pathology, not fraud. The girls were hexed.

Hansen harbored no love of the Salem inquisitors, especially the cruel Hathorne; an historian of, among other fields, jazz, he was not easily dismissed as a Puritan apologist. He mourned the innocents hanged at Salem (only the brutish Europeans burned their witches at the stake), but he also credited the many eyewitness accounts that something darksome there indwelled.

Relying on trial documents and contemporary testimony, Hansen depicted the cursemaker Sarah Good, verily a hag, as a probable practitioner of the malefic arts, and he indicted Bridget Bishop, whose cellar was filled with pin-stuck puppets, as almost certainly a witch. Wilmot "Mammy" Redd, who was hanged, "clearly practiced witchcraft," her favorite murrain being to curse an enemy so that she would never again urinate or defecate.

The Puritans actually had an exemplary record on witchcraft.

He was also suspicious of Tituba, the Carib Indian slave who for modern propaganda purposes is often rendered as a feisty Negro (think Whoopi Goldberg). "The Devil came to me and bid me serve him," admitted Tituba in one of about 50 Salem confessions, admittedly pre-Miranda.

Hansen's revisionism embraced even poor Cotton Mather. Far from being superstitious and intolerant, Mather was "a model of restraint and caution" whose scrupulous guidelines for witch-hunters, if followed, would have saved most of Salem's martyrs.

And as for New England's reputation as a hotbed of cold fanatics, Hansen pointed out that fewer than 50 witches were hanged in the colonies: "a genuinely exemplary record, considerably superior to Europe," where 5,000 were burned in the seventeenth century in Alsace alone.

Whether he was right or wrong—and only Sarah Good knows—Chadwick Hansen is a roadblock to the cheap Salem metaphor. Not that the determined driver can't find a detour to *Crucible*-land. The editor of the most recent Salem anthology, for instance, nominates Hitler, Joe McCarthy, and Slobodan Milosevic as Salem's spawn. And Arthur Miller banks his royalties.

—Bill Kauffman

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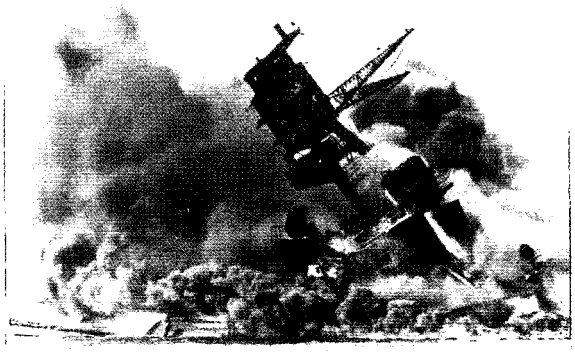
Patriotism For Sale

It's tempting to lower standards when it comes to patriotic films. After all, Hollywood movies that honor love of country are few and far between, so shouldn't we be grateful for those we get?

Not in the case of *Pearl Harbor*. This big-budget bid for the summer blockbuster crown exploits patriotism the way other movies exploit violence or sex. Director Michael Bay and producer Jerry Bruckheimer, two of the crassest filmmakers in the business, spun sex and violence into box-office gold with hits such as *The Rock* and *Armageddon*, and here they've turned civic pride into another commodity.

Bay and Bruckheimer have fed the press a lot of bunk about wanting *Pearl Harbor* to honor American veterans, but what the two men are mostly after, however, is artistic respect (and the ticket receipts that often come with it). An action film at heart, *Pearl Harbor* wraps itself in the elaborate dress of a "prestige picture," from its bloated, three-hour running time to its epic scope. The movie opens with two little boys playing fighter pilots in a crop-duster, then jumps ahead to the eve of World War II, when Rafe McCawley (Ben Affleck) and Danny Walker (Josh Hartnett) are grown-up pilots in the U.S. Army Corps. Their friendship is put to the test when they both fall for the same nurse, Evelyn (Kate Beckinsale).

In essence, *Pearl Harbor* borrows the formula that earned big money for *Titanic*: Drape a corny romance over a showcase action sequence. The attack itself is staged with surprising coherence by Bay, considering his usual technique of featuring explosions while vigorously shaking the camera. In addition to clever visual touches—including the camera dropping from the sky to follow a Japanese bomb—Bay steeps the sequence in classic portraits of Americana. When enemy Zeroes suddenly scream across the Hawaiian landscape, they cut into the Norman Rockwell-like scenes of a mother hanging laundry out to dry and boys playing baseball on a dusty field. Not just a military attack, but an assault on all it means to be an American.



Destruction of the *USS Arizona* at the real Pearl Harbor.

Even if you appreciate the traditional values inherent in these images, you'll still likely cringe at the way they're used to manipulate the audience's emotions. The attack on Pearl Harbor isn't treated so much as a defining moment in American history, but rather as an ingredient necessary for box-office success.

Equally insulting are the film's hokey caricatures, which do a disservice to the veterans who served at Pearl Harbor. The men are generic, all-American archetypes, such as Affleck's Rafe McCawley, with his perfectly tilted pilot's cap and jutting chin. For their part, the nurses file across the screen like boy-crazy chorus girls from a Broadway musical, what with their clown-red lipstick and penchant for slapping cute patients on the rear. These aren't tributes to servicemen and women, they're cliched cartoons.

Despite the kisses it blows to U.S. pride—"God help anyone who goes to war with America," a British pilot tells Rafe early on—so afraid are movie makers of hurting worldwide grosses that they paint the Japanese with ludicrous strokes of political correctness. *Pearl Harbor* posits that the Japanese empire had no choice but to attack Hawaii on a sleepy Sunday morning because America had cut off Japan's oil supply.

Pearl Harbor has noble themes, to be sure, but they are handed to Bay on a silver platter—he merely reheats them before shoving them down our throats. Loss, sacrifice, courage, and bravery aren't really addressed; they're grand ideas that lay limp on the screen.

What's missing is an honest exploration of these motifs. For all its aping of *Saving Private Ryan*, *Pearl Harbor* never raises the tough moral questions about war's necessity and cost that underlined Steven Spielberg's haunting film.

There's nothing wrong with an adventure movie set against the backdrop of World War II. What's grating about *Pearl Harbor* is that it pretends to be so much more. So to praise it as such—to say this is a triumphant cinematic testament to our country's history—cheapens the very idea of patriotism by turning us into suckers who shed tears whenever some hack filmmaker waves a flag. By the time the movie winds up with a supposedly inspirational epilogue narrated by Evelyn, its self-importance has become laughable. "America suffered," she proclaims in a wavering voice, "but America grew stronger." Not by lauding movies like *Pearl Harbor*.

—Josh Larsen

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BookTalk

REGULATIONS THAT REPRESS

By Clint Bolick

Only One Place of Redress: African Americans, Labor Regulations, & the Courts From Reconstruction to the New Deal
By David E. Bernstein
Duke University Press, 191 pages, $39.95

Jim Crow segregation is widely considered an historical relic, long ago meeting its well-deserved demise. But in the realm of enterprise, there are pervasive laws at every level of government hampering the ability of minorities and the poor to earn a living, almost as if Jim Crow lived on.

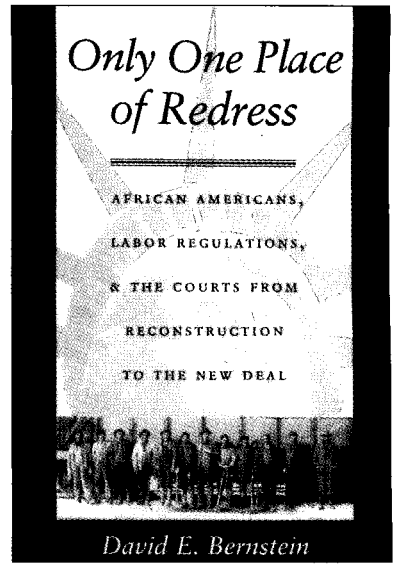
Legal scholars and historians have written much about segregation laws and other blatant examples of discriminatory state action against African Americans, notes author David Bernstein, an associate professor at George Mason University School of Law. By contrast, the literature on more subtle discriminatory laws, such as labor legislation that served to restrict African Americans' access to the labor market, is sparse.

Bernstein sets out to fill the gap in *Only One Place of Redress*, chronicling the blizzard of national, state, and local laws that discouraged enterprise among blacks and immigrants from the Civil War to the New Deal. Many of the laws were not overtly aimed at blacks or other minorities, but their impact was felt most keenly there. Occupational licensing laws, for example, especially hurt blacks and other newcomers. Many such laws remain on the books today. Licensing laws effectively cut off the lower rungs of the economic ladder for people with little capital or formal education.

The Davis-Bacon Act exemplified the protectionist laws of the first half of the twentieth century. The law originally was proposed in 1927 by Rep. Robert Bacon of Long Island, who was alarmed about low-paid black Southerners coming into his district and taking jobs away from white, unionized construction workers. By 1931, when the Depression intensified competition for scarce jobs, the law was enacted, requiring contractors to pay prevailing wages on all federal construction projects. The law removed the economic incentive to hire unskilled black laborers, and the black unemployment rate in the construction industry has remained far higher than the white rate ever since.

The one place of redress to which Bernstein refers is the courts, which could safeguard against oppressive state laws, including restraints on enterprise. For a while, especially after the post-Civil War passing of the Fourteenth Amendment, they did just that. In the late 1800s, the U.S. Supreme Court nullified a San Francisco law forbidding laundry businesses from being housed in wooden buildings. The law was ostensibly enacted to protect public health and safety, but in was really meant to drive Chinese entrepreneurs out of business. In the landmark 1905 *Lochner v. New York* decision, the Court invalidated a maximum-hours law for bakery workers designed to protect unionized German workers against competition from Jewish and Italian immigrants.

The period of searching legal review was short, however. The *Lochner* era ended with the New Deal, when the Supreme Court relegated economic liberties to unprotected status, where they have essentially remained ever since. Meanwhile, civil rights groups abandoned efforts to protect freedom of enterprise in favor of political empowerment and affirmative action.



Bernstein's book makes a unique and serious contribution to the quest to protect freedom of enterprise. It demonstrates that government is often the oppressor, not the savior, of the oppressed. Bernstein shows how the beneficent facade of many economic regulations actually masks protectionist objectives. This untold history underscores the need to remove oppressive barriers to opportunity that have persisted far too long.

Clint Bolick is litigation director at the Institute for Justice and author of Transformation: The Promise and Politics of Empowerment.

KING OF NEW YORK

By George J. Marlin

Empire Statesman: The Rise and Redemption of Al Smith
By Robert A. Slayton
Free Press, 480 pages, $30

Finally, a biography befitting the greatest twentieth-century leader of urban America: New York Governor Alfred Emanuel Smith. Responsible for a dizzying array of public works and social legislation, Smith was a remarkable repre-

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sentative of and advocate for the city and state of New York.

Born in the shadow of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1873, 13-year-old Al dropped out of grammar school upon the death of his father, a manual laborer, to take on various menial jobs to support his penniless family. After spending long hours rolling fish barrels at the Fulton Fish Market (in later years he would boast that his alma mater was F.F.M.), Al would spend his leisure time participating in parish plays and oratory contests. It was at these activities that he caught the eye of Tammany Hall district leader Tom Foley. Hired by the clubhouse as a county process server, Smith advanced to municipal court clerk, state representative, speaker of the Assembly, Manhattan sheriff, president of New York City's board of aldermen and, in 1918, election to the first of four terms as governor.

Smith was certainly one of the most colorful politicians of the Roaring '20s, known for his brown derby hat, wide striped suits, ever-present cigar, and a gravelly New York accent that was instantly recognizable on the "raddio." By 1928, he was convinced the time had come for the inner cities to promote one of their own to lead the national government—and who better epitomized the role of urban leader than the governor of New York? Described in Franklin Roosevelt's 1928 nominating speech as the "Happy Warrior," Al Smith went on to be the first Roman Catholic nominated for the presidency by a major party.

Most political analysts agree that America's prosperity made it impossible for any Democrat to be elected president in 1928; still, the campaign was savagely fought. Al Smith had felt the back of the hand of the Knickerbocker crowd, who were repulsed by the waves of immigrants invading New York's shores. But he didn't anticipate the viciousness and hatred unleashed by the dark powers of prejudice. Anti-Catholics and anti-urban bigots portrayed Smith as a captive of the Tammany Hall brothel and the "whore of Babylon"—the Pope.

Slayton devotes several well-researched chapters to the campaign waged against the governor. An *American Standard* headline proclaimed "Rome Suggests That Pope May Move Here." Another publication held Smith responsible for all of urban society's perceived ills: "card playing, cocktail drinking, poodle dogs, divorces, novels, stuffy rooms, dancing, evolution, Clarence Darrow, overeating, nude art, prize fighting, actors, greyhound racing, and modernism."

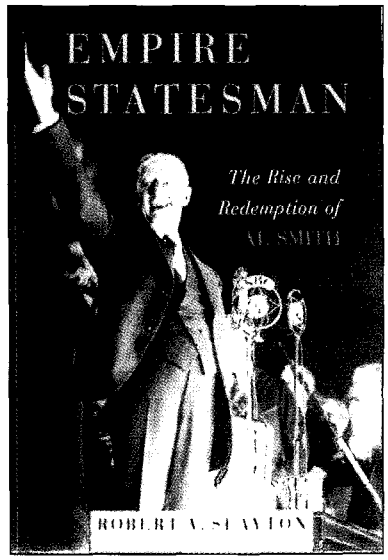
Smith lost badly to Hoover, receiving 40.7 percent of votes cast. However, he won 6 million more votes than any previous Democratic candidate for president, and for the first time, a Democrat carried America's inner cities. Smith's candidacy laid the foundations for FDR's victory four years later.

In January 1929, Smith turned over the keys to New York state's executive mansion to his hand-picked successor, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. After 32 years of public service, Citizen Smith became a member of the private sector, but remained a major voice in politics.

When Roosevelt became the 1932 presidential candidate, many pols tried to prevent Lieutenant Governor Herbert Lehman from moving up to the governor's chair. Brushing aside their thinly veiled anti-Semitism, Smith threatened that if Lehman were not nominated, he would run for mayor of New York City in 1933 and throw the Tammany gang out of City Hall. When one boss demanded to know on what ticket he presumed to run, Smith replied, "On a Chinese laundry ticket I can beat you and your crowd." Lehman went on to serve his state as governor for eight years.

For the last 70 years, however, the Left has held a grudge against Smith. They have never forgiven his political break with FDR and cannot accept that he was to the right of the New Deal. To rationalize Smith's "lapse" in judgment, they portray him in his final years as a bitter drunkard.

Slayton refutes that charge, and restores Smith's legacy by proving that the "piece of the puzzle often overlooked was that Al Smith and Franklin Roosevelt actually did have ideological differences, that Smith really did object to expansion of the federal government." Slayton points out that "Smith himself wrote that the Democratic Party has been 'since the



Back then Democrats opposed centralized Federal control, and supported individual and states rights.

days of Jefferson, the party opposed to highly centralized Federal control, the party of individual and states rights.'"

In 1936, Al Smith, disgusted with the excesses of the New Deal, "took a walk" from the national Democratic Party. "The regulars were out on a limb holding the bag, driven out of the party," he declared, "because some new bunch that nobody ever heard of in their life before came and took charge and started planning everything." Al's party of the neighborhoods was becoming the party of the social engineers.

Robert Slayton's *Empire Statesman* restores this legendary figure whose plain talk and actions made government responsible and accessible to his beloved common man.

George Marlin is general editor of The Collected Works of G.K. Chesterton *and author of the forthcoming* Fighting the Good Fight: A History of the New York State Conservative Party.

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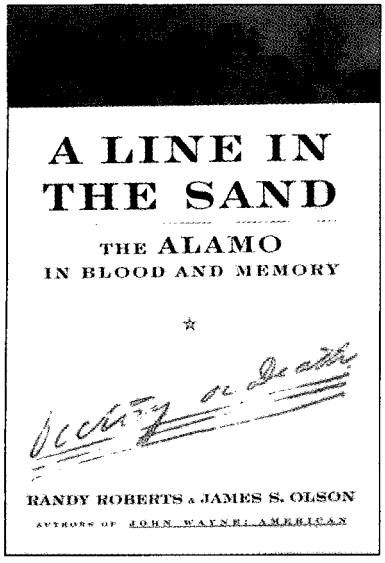

Respect for valor lives on amidst life's whirl.

REMEMBER THE ALAMO!

By William Murchison

A Line in the Sand: The Alamo in Blood and Memory
By Randy Roberts and James S. Olson
Free Press, 352 pages, $26

Who doesn't know, or think he knows, the story of the Alamo? The events of the great 13-day siege of 1836 are generally familiar. General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna's numerically superior army annihilated a small garrison of now-legendary figures—Jim Bowie, William B. Travis, Davy Crockett, to name the best-known—who chose death over surrender. At San Jacinto a month and a half later, the Texans went on to pay back the Mexicans, winning Texas an independence it maintained until joining the United States nine years later.

Yes, but what did it *mean*? Such is the undying question which Randy Roberts and James Olson address in this admirable book. Speaking as a seventh-generation Texan, I judge the authors to have set the standard henceforth for consideration of the topic.

Not that all native Texans will savor their every conclusion. The myth of the Alamo, presently subject to disparagement and depreciation, is bred in our bones. It was a heroic fight for freedom, we learned early. As the theme song in John Wayne's epic movie *The Alamo* insisted, "They died to give us freedom / That is all we need to know / Of the 13 days of glory at the siege of Alamo."

Well, not quite all, apparently. Myths seem to produce counter-myths. Cultural dispositions erode. Heroism once was in vogue; selfless sacrifice was an ideal. Recognition of these deeds and qualities served national purposes, scratched cultural itches. Quite different are the standards of our era. The heroes of the Alamo, according to one prissy revisionist writer, were "pirates," "fanatics," and "hairy, wild-eyed rebels."

Roberts and Olson look coldly on that viewpoint, but what they address is not just the battle of the Alamo, but also the ways in which succeeding generations have appropriated it for their own purposes. The authors provide valuable context to details familiar from folklore, television, and movies. For instance, the cultural outlooks of the warriors: The Texans were adventurous, liberty-loving, and not over-fond of Mexican-Catholic culture. Santa Anna was steeped in some of that culture's then-worst aspects: despotism and bloody reprisal for rebellion. In 1836, little sympathy existed between gringos and Mexicans. The massacre of the defenders fused in the minds of Houston's soldiers the motives of vengeance and patriotism.

Around the Alamo legend the state's sense of identity coalesced. Memories of the glorious revolution kept Texans after the Civil War "from wallowing in 'Lost Causism' like other Southern states." Even before Fess Parker became "King of the Wild Frontier" in Disney's TV lionization of Davy Crockett, the Alamo was "our noblest exemplification of sacrifice, heroic and pure." This was on the authority of Franklin D. Roosevelt, visiting the shrine during the 1936 Texas Centennial.

Disney's TV series transformed the Alamo "from a Texas shrine to an American one," responsive to Cold War tensions and the sense "that America needed heroes who represented liberty and the rights of man." Walt "consciously turned the Alamo into freedom's last stand," and the nation went wild in response.

Shortly afterwards came John Wayne. His 1960 movie, *The Alamo*—"not just a Texas story but an American story, a tale of brutal oppression and the struggle to be free"—did good but not great business. Was the legend about to crest, along with unambiguous American dedication to the frontier virtues of heroism and sacrifice?

By the 1980s, the Alamo had become "one of the most hotly contested symbols in the nation," refracting the views of America then on offer: home of the brave versus racist-imperialist blight. No consensus on the Alamo appears possible until we decide what kind of nation we are, a prospect that looks less and less imminent. Multiculturalism reduces hopes for any unified view of the Alamo's meaning. Will new immigrants find resonance in the story? Texas Mexicans—the state's second largest ethnic group—don't currently appear resentful concerning the Alamo experience, but may remain so only to the extent that Anglo Texans refrain from frantic boast and foolish word.

The glory days of the Alamo legend seem behind us. Yet as Roberts and Olson suggest, the lure of the place should endure. Circumstances and perspectives change with time and human movement. Respect for valor, amid all the whirl, continues.

William Murchison is a senior columnist for the Dallas Morning News.

THE '60S VIEWED RIGHTLY

By Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.

Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus
By Rick Perlstein
Hill and Wang, 671 pages, $30

"America would remember the sixties as a decade of the Left," writes Rick Perlstein, in his fascinating and revisionist

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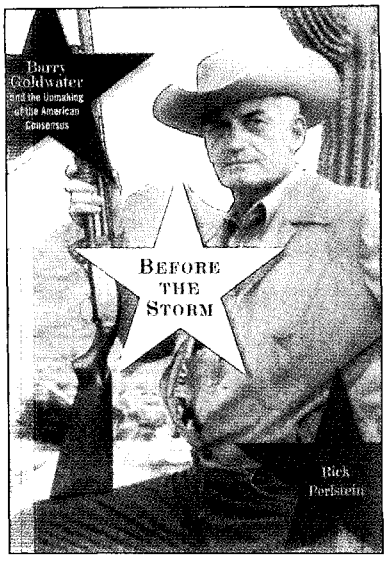

LBJ won the election but over the long run Goldwater's vision has triumphed.

account of how the 1964 presidential campaign marked a new course of American political life. Really it was the "decade when the polarization began."

The polarization concerned the role of government. In his 1964 campaign against Barry Goldwater, Lyndon Baines Johnson articulated the postwar liberal consensus: "Government is not an enemy of the people. It is the people." Goldwater championed individual rights and liberties, and called the government "a Leviathan, a vast national authority out of touch with the people, and out of control." LBJ won the election by a huge margin, but over the long run, according to Perlstein, Goldwater's vision has triumphed.

Among the book's major contributions is tracing the origin of the Goldwater movement to Clarence Manion, former dean of the Notre Dame Law School. Manion, a man of the anti-Roosevelt Old Right, was displeased to see Eisenhower carrying on the New Deal rather than repudiating it. This inspired much work, including his effort to draft Barry Goldwater for president.

The man and the movement needed a manifesto, and it was Manion who set out to create one. He decided on William Buckley's brother-in-law, Brent Bozell, as ghostwriter, and in six weeks, Bozell finished *Conscience of a Conservative.* Rather than deal with a left-wing New York publisher, Manion contracted directly with a printer. The book debuted at number 14 on the *New York Times* bestseller list, and by November 1960, had sold 500,000 copies.

"I have little interest in streamlining government or making it more efficient for I mean to reduce its size," the book proclaimed. "I do not undertake to promote welfare for I propose to extend freedom. My aim is not to pass laws, but to repeal them."

Yet Goldwater also proposed to expand the state. His book urged the U.S. government to summon the will and the means to take the initiative against the Russians. Later, in the sort of rhetoric that would lead to his defeat, he was to advocate atom-bombing North Vietnam—a far cry from the limited government theory that had set his movement in motion.

Besides giving Manion his rightful place, the book also credits William J. Baroody, Sr. of the American Enterprise Institute with being the chief intellectual entrepreneur of the Goldwater campaign. Discussing the increasing influence of AEI, Perlstein says that "ideas once enforced at union-busting manufacturies by goonsquad and court injunction now received scientific demonstration by economists with Austrian names."

More surprising is the role that William Buckley played. Buckley had been skeptical about Goldwater since 1959, and had even pooh-poohed the idea of *Conscience of a Conservative.* He early on said, "I don't want to be identified with a total political failure," and wrote a series of hostile newspaper columns. Late in the campaign, Buckley told Richard Clurman, chief correspondent of *Time*, that if Goldwater were elected, "That might be a serious problem." Later, speaking to a shocked and silent Young Americans for Freedom convention, he dismissed the campaign: "We do not believe in the Platonic affirmation of our own little purities."

But the campaign was most hobbled by Goldwater's support of war, precisely the part of his platform Buckley most approved of. He promised to end the draft as soon as possible, but it was not enough. The famous daisy/atom bomb TV commercial wounded Goldwater, and Americans came to fear he would start a nuclear conflict. So, on election day, the (apparent) peace candidate won.

The entire drama—the draft movement, the nomination struggle, Nelson Rockefeller, the hopelessly biased media—is chronicled in these pages. The smears are especially bracing to recount. We are reminded of Walter Cronkite's and Daniel Schorr's on-air claim that Goldwater was going to Hitler's former vacation home in Bavaria to meet neo-Nazis. Norman Mailer, covering the convention for *Esquire*, said the resounding cheers reminded him of *Sieg Heils.* Pornographer Ralph Ginzberg set up *Fact* magazine to recruit psychiatrists who would call Goldwater crazy. A Methodist magazine referred to its issue on Goldwaterism as a "continuation of its response to the threat of Hitler."

Though "our own little purities" only won 27 million votes, Americans did not forget the call for freedom from federal power. And many of the astounding 3.9 million Goldwater volunteers remained active in politics. Indeed, with the end of the Cold War making possible the end of warfare ideology on the right, the domestic heart of Goldwaterism is making progress once again.

These days, hardly anyone outside academia believes that the more that government manages social and economic life, the better off we will be. To a great extent, we are still in the midst of the anti-New Deal revolution, and far closer today to seeing its potential fulfilled than we were in 1964.

Llewellyn Rockwell is president of the Ludwig von Mises Institute and editor of LewRockwell.com

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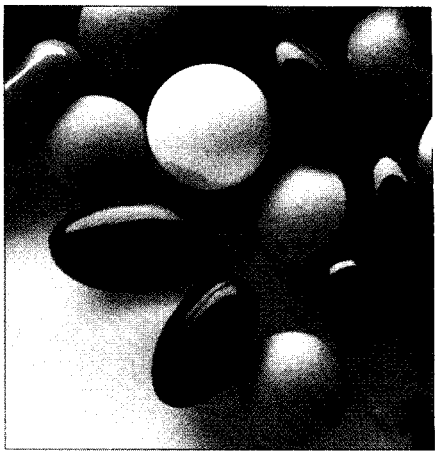
Edited by Martin Morse Wooster

the Digest

Summaries of important new research from the nation's universities, think tanks, and investigative publications



POLITICS

Campaign Finance Reform: The First Amendment Comes First

Bradley A. Smith. *Unfree Speech: The Folly of Campaign Finance Reform.* Princeton University Press, 41 William Street, Princeton, New Jersey 08540.

Federal Election Commissioner Smith warns that if campaign finance reformers have their way, Americans may end up with a system where "no political speech is allowed except with prior approval of the government."

Few of the ways candidates express themselves—pamphlets, newspaper ads, T.V. commercials—are free. "If spending money were not a form of speech," Smith writes, "the First Amendment would become hollow for all but newspapers and other press outlets, since any effort to spread one's message, through advertising or pamphleteering, could be stripped of First Amendment protections simply by attacking the expenditure of money."

Smith also contends that money doesn't influence politicians as much as many believe. Tough anti-bribery laws prohibit politicians from directly performing favors in return for campaign contributions. The reason the Abscam scandal of the 1970s and the Keating Five scandal of the 1980s were shocking was because they were atypical.

Since reformers can't prove money corrupts politicians, they argue campaign contributions unfairly open doors for lobbyists. What's overlooked is that lobbying organizations have influence not only because of their donations, but because they represent mass groups. The National Rifle Association's clout on Capitol Hill, for example, doesn't just come from its campaign contributions, but from the over 3 million NRA members who represent up to 5 percent of the voters in some congressional districts. With such large memberships, groups like the NRA, the teachers' unions, and the AARP would maintain great influence even if political donations were severely restricted.

Some politicians, under the pretense of cleaning up Congress, want to censor political speech they don't like. Some, like Democratic presidential contender Bill Bradley, have proposed taxing issue-oriented political advertisements. His GOP rival, Sen. John McCain, likewise expressed a desire, were it Constitutional, to ban all negative campaign advertisements.

Others call for outright government regulation of the press, claiming that newspaper editorial endorsements are unregulated campaign contributions. Ohio state solicitor Richard Hasen, for example, would issue every potential voter a $100 voucher, which campaigns could collect and spend. Interest groups could also spend these vouchers, provided they were pre-approved by federal authorities. No other spending by campaigns would be allowed under Hasen's proposal. Even editorial pages would have to collect vouchers before they would be allowed to endorse candidates.

"The attempt to regulate political speech in the guise of campaign finance reform has been a folly," Smith concludes. Far better, he believes, for vigorous campaigns conducted according to the rules of the First Amendment—that "Congress shall make no law…abridging freedom of the speech, or of the press."

ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

Drug Prices Are Reasonable

Ronald Bailey, "Damn the Pusher Man," in *Reason* (April 2001), 3415 South Sepulveda Boulevard #400, Los Angeles, California 90034.

Science correspondent Bailey suggests that most criticisms of big pharmaceutical companies are unfounded. Among them:

• *Drug prices are too high.* Spending on prescription drugs is increasing rapidly, with increases between 1997 and 1999 of between 14 and 19 percent. But that's because we're consuming more drugs, not because average unit costs are rising—between 1993 and 1999 inflation rose 18 percent, and drug prices rose 18.1 percent. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average American spends 1 percent of his income on prescription drugs—about the amount spent on tobacco and alcohol.

As drug prices rise, hospital stays decrease. Columbia University econo-

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mist Frank Lichtenberg calculates that for every additional dollar people spend on prescriptions, they save an average of $3.65 in hospital bills. In 1991, New Hampshire capped the amount seniors could be reimbursed under Medicaid for prescriptions, but ended the cap after the state spent 20 times as much on hospital care as it would have spent on drugs.

• *Drug companies are too profitable.* By conventional accounting practices, drug companies have profit margins of up to 20 percent. But drug companies can write off their huge research and development budgets. If pharmaceutical firms deducted only as much as other industries their profits would be about 9 percent.

• *Drug companies benefit from corporate welfare.* Some argue that pharmaceutical firms take government-subsidized research and use these findings to produce highly profitable drugs. But the entire 2000 budget for the National Institutes of Health was $17.8 billion. In contrast, private drug companies spent $26.4 billion on research and development in 2000.

While government grants do fuel basic research that drug companies later often benefit from, the feds get a good return for their research dollar. Consider Pharmacia & Upjohn's glaucoma-fighting drug Xalatan, first discovered in a $4 million government study in 1982. Economist Lichtenberg calculates that this drug, which accounts for 7 percent of Pharmacia & Upjohn's profits, could thus account for 7 percent of the firm's corporate income tax bill, or $24 million. Thus the government is getting at least $20 million more in taxes for Xalatan than it provided in grants.

Bailey urges Congress not to impose price controls or other burdensome new regulations on the drug companies. "It is because of our relatively unregulated market," he writes, "that the U.S. provides the rest of the world with new drugs."

The New Economy's Not So New

Timothy Taylor, "Thinking About a 'New Economy,'" in *The Public Interest* (Spring 2001), 1112 Sixteenth Street N.W. #530, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Journal of Economic Perspectives managing editor Taylor believes the argument that computers have instituted dramatic changes in the economy "appears overblown."

Taylor argues it's important to examine productivity growth. Between 1950 and 1975, productivity increased, on average, by 3 percent per year, thanks to new technologies, falling tariffs, and increased consumer demand. But between 1973 and 1995, productivity shrunk to an average annual increase of only 1.4 percent. From 1995-2000, however, productivity went back up to an average annual rise of 2.9 percent.

Economists debate the reason for this. One cause of the revival appears to be the 400 percent increase businesses made in computer spending. Another reason is the steadily falling price of computer power.

Much of the economic benefits computers could provide have not yet taken place. Just half of American homes have access to the Internet, and only a tiny fraction of all commerce is now conducted on line. Computers could provide a considerable boost if they could substantially reduce the number of employees processing orders, and also if they could enable businesses to dramatically reduce their inventories (which, in 2000, accounted for $1.1 trillion).

Taylor suggests that ultimately computers are as important as earlier advances like the steam engine, the electric dynamo, the telegraph, and the telephone—but no more so. Computers will make life better, he concludes, but their effect on productivity and inflation "will remain within the experience of the past half-century. The Information Revolution is more evolution than revolution."

SOCIETY

Are Two Fathers Just As Good?

Robert Lerner and Althea Nagai, *No Basis: What The Studies Don't Tell Us About Same-Sex Parenting*. Marriage Law Project, Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1015 Fifteenth Street N.W. #900, Washington, D.C. 20005.

Social scientists Lerner and Nagai examined 49 studies supposedly showing that same-sex parenting didn't harm children and concluded that nearly all were junk science which "should form no basis for public policy recommendations." Among the failings of these studies:

• *Volunteer samples.* Good social science proceeds from comparing key in two different random population samples. But 48 of the 49 studies surveyed were composed of samples in which the participants volunteered. Volunteers are not representative of general populations, because people who volunteer tend to be more enthusiastic about the activity they're being polled about than those who are randomly selected. This is particularly true of sexuality studies.

• *Bad design.* Only 28 of the 49 studies directly compared heterosexual and homosexual couples. In most of these cases, the heterosexual couples were recruited through feminist publications, single-parent support groups, or day care groups. In many of these studies, the researchers failed to make sure that the groups they were comparing were as similar as possible. For example, in some studies, the lesbian couples tended to be better educated, higher earners, with more support resources than comparable heterosexual couples. The researchers failed to account for these differences.

• *Small sample size.* It generally takes 400-700 people in a survey to prevent biases from creeping into the sample, making the analysis invalid. But only one of the 49 studies meets this standard. Nearly all of the studies have fewer than 100 participants, ensuring that no definitive statistical conclusions can be drawn.

Lerner and Nagai conclude that these studies are "deeply flawed pieces of research" that fail in their efforts to show there are no differences between same-sex families and traditional ones. Therefore, such research should not be used in the courtroom either to defend same-sex marriage or to bolster adoption cases by same-sex couples.

SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENT

Let It Be

Robert H. Nelson, *From Waste to Wilderness: Maintaining Biodiversity on*

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Nuclear-Bomb-Building Sites. Competitive Enterprise Institute, 1001 Connecticut Avenue N.W. #1250, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Nelson, a public policy professor at the University of Maryland, sees problems with the Department of Energy's (DOE) $6 billion a year efforts to clean up America's nuclear waste sites. He believes these radioactive areas—which encompass 2.1 million acres, an area greater than Rhode Island and Delaware—would recover more quickly if they were left alone.

During the Cold War, many of these government-run nuclear production facilities committed flagrant environmental abuses. In 1989, FBI agents raided the Rocky Flats facility near Denver and seized files showing mismanagement. In response, the DOE in 1990 started its Environmental Management program, and promised to protect the nation from the nuclear waste produced in these facilities over the past 45 years.

But the Environmental Management program has turned into a giant pork barrel. For instance, while there were never more than 6,000 people producing nuclear weapons at the DOE's Hanford facility in Washington at its very peak, the DOE has employed as many as 15,000 "environmental" workers there at times.

According to Nelson, it's better to leave these lands alone, as they already teem with wildlife. The Savannah River facility in Georgia and South Carolina is one of the largest wilderness areas east of the Mississippi, with 50 types of mammals, 200 kinds of birds, and at least three endangered species. The Hanford facility not only protects 51 miles of the Columbia River, but is a home for such endangered or threatened animals as the bald eagle and the peregrine falcon.

It's unclear whether there are technologies which could purge these areas of radiation to such levels that humans could live there. The DOE, in a 1999 report, admitted that on three-quarters of the land in question public access would need to be blocked for decades. Thus doing nothing would not only preserve wilderness areas, but also save money. Nelson estimates that leaving these lands alone "could, over the long run, save U.S. taxpayers more than $50 billion."

OTHER COUNTRIES

A Shrinking Planet

Nicholas Eberstadt, "The Population Implosion," in *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2001), Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1779 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

For decades, there have been warnings of a "population explosion" that would swamp the world with people. But American Enterprise Institute fellow Eberstadt warns it's more likely future problems will come from *shrinkage* of the world's population.

From 1950 to 2000, global fertility levels fell by 40 percent. According to demographers at the United Nations and the Census Bureau, 44 percent of the world now has "subreplacement fertility," with families producing less than two children per couple. The lengthy list of countries where couples don't replace themselves includes the U.S., Russia, nearly all of Europe, China, and Japan.

In addition, life expectancy is falling in many parts of the world. Census Bureau demographers calculate that 39 countries will have lower life expectancies in 2010 than in 1990. These countries include ten of the former 15 republics of the USSR (including Russia), where drinking and smoking have taken their toll, plus 23 African nations ravaged by AIDS.

Population forecasts, Eberstadt warns, are often wrong. But the parts of the planet that are getting increasingly old and sick are likely to be faced with "a diminution of human well-being, capabilities, and choices."

Ailing South East Asia

Peter Hartcher, "From Miracle to Malaise," in *The National Interest* (Spring 2001), 1112 Sixteenth Street N.W. #540, Washington, D.C. 20036.

The currency crisis that scarred the nations of Southeast Asia in 1997-98, warns Hartcher, Washington editor of the *Australian Financial Review*, have left these nations "enduringly impaired." "Much of Southeast Asia's prosperity," he warns, "was lost to the crisis and has not been regained."

Before the economic crisis, the nations of Southeast Asia had economies that were steadily growing by 6-10 percent a year. During the downturn, though, the Malaysian, Filipino, and South Korean economies all got smaller, and the Indonesian and Thai economies actually shrunk by a startling 10 percent. In all these countries, many banks, stuck with bad portfolios, collapsed and were nationalized. As a result, the Thai government now owns one-third of that country's banks, while Indonesia owns 78 percent of its national banks. The result: These nations are starved for capital and drowning in debt. Indonesia acquired so many bad banks that the central bank failed.

The currency crisis also left Southeast Asian nations with weak leaders prone to nationalism and saber-rattling. Filipino voters replaced competent president Fidel Ramos with "semi-literate drunkard and crook" Joseph Estrada. In January, Thai voters elected as their president Thaksin Shinawatra, a billionaire who bought the Thai rural vote by promising to personally give each village a $23,000 grant if he was elected. Shinawatra is also under investigation by the Thai National Counter-corruption Commission for tax evasion and for hiding $232 million in assets.

In prosperous times, Southeast Asian scholars liked to say that their countries were as ethnically diverse as the Balkans. But now, reports Hartcher, Southeast Asia is also like the Balkans in having a bad economy, and the region will face rising ethnic tensions along with the economic stagnation. With the important exception of Singapore, Hartcher writes, Southeast Asian democracies "are under tremendous stress, and a stinking tide of corruption is on the rise."

We welcome submissions of reports, articles, or papers you think should be summarized in THE DIGEST. Please send to P.O. Box 8093, Silver Spring, Maryland 20907.

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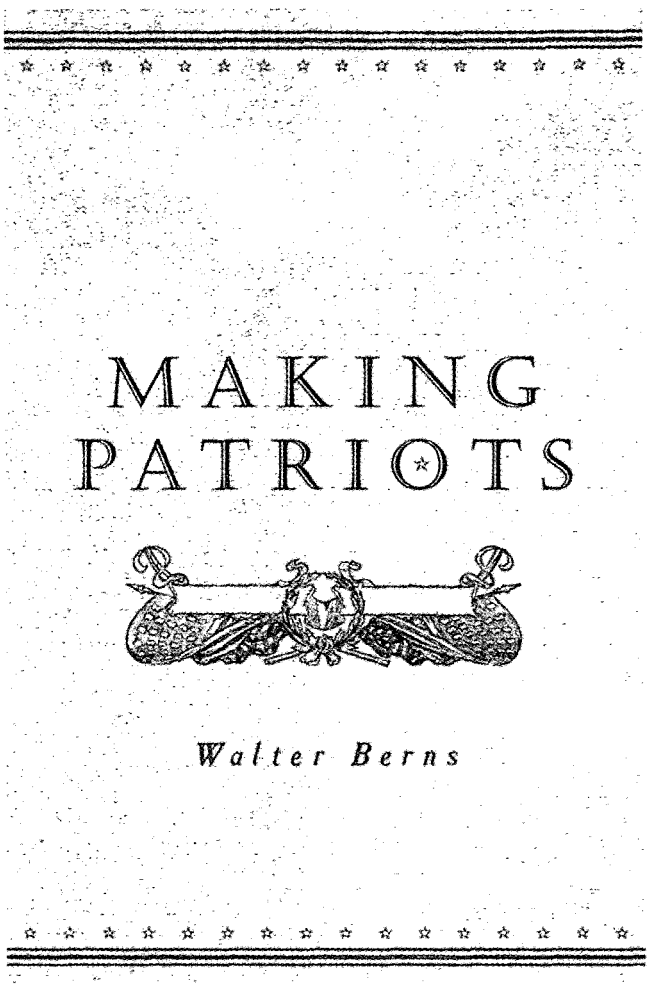

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Walter Berns

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Opinion Pulse

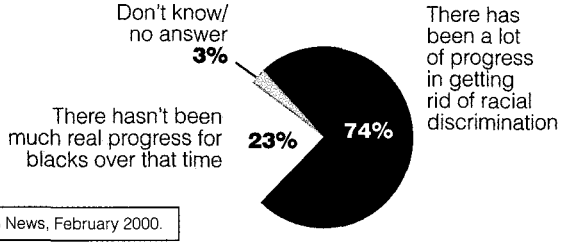
Edited by Karlyn Bowman

Racial Progress

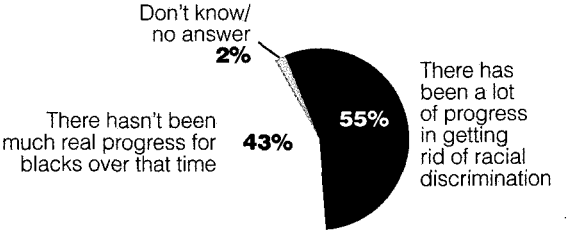
Majorities of blacks and whites believe there has been a lot of progress in getting rid of racial discrimination since the 1960s, and both groups say that race relations in their own communities are generally good. Blacks are much less positive than whites, however, on the state of race relations in the country. Blacks are also downhearted about whether racial equality will be achieved in their lifetime. Just 6 percent say blacks have already achieved it.

Question: Some people say that since the 1960s...?

White response

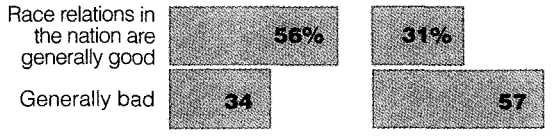


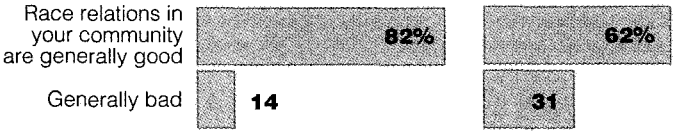
Black response



Source: CBS News, February 2000.

Question: Do you think...?

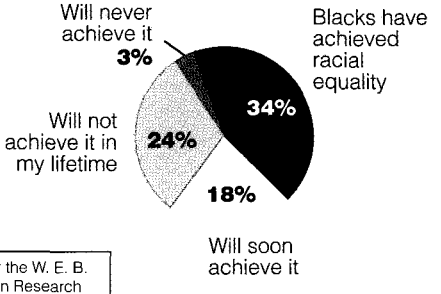




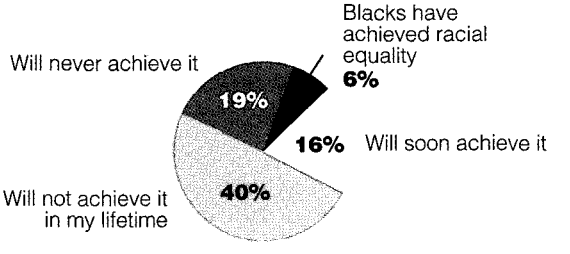
Source: CBS News, February 2000.

Question: Do you think...?

White response



Black response



Source: Knowledge Networks for the W. E. B. DuBois Institute for Afro-American Research and the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture, October and December 2000.

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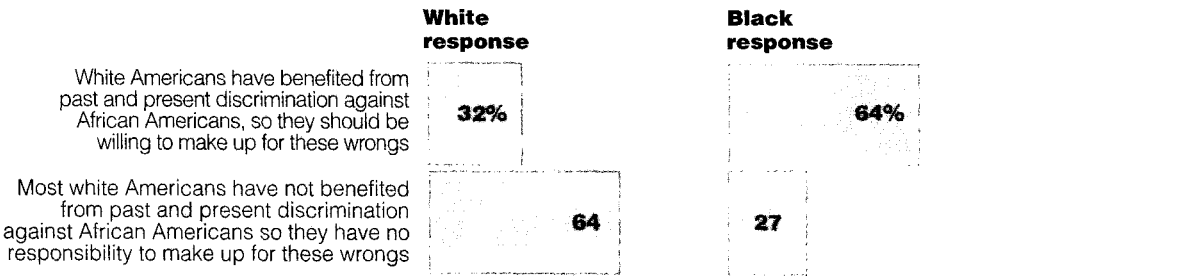
Reparations?

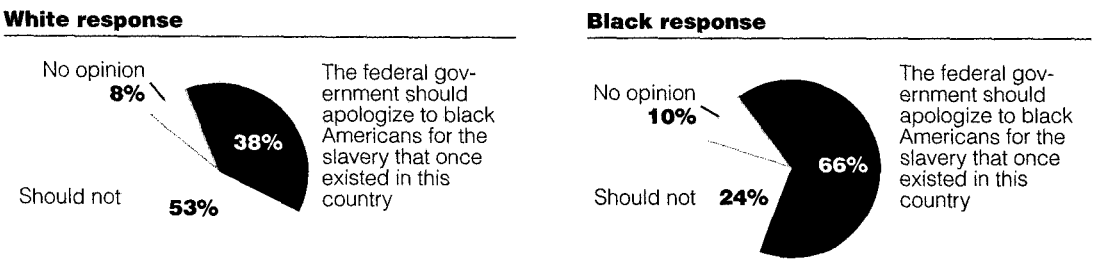
No matter how you phrase the question, black and white Americans differ profoundly on the issue of an apology or reparations for past racial discrimination. In one poll last year, 53 percent of blacks supported the idea of the federal government paying money to African Americans as compensation for slavery. Only 3 percent of whites supported the idea.

Question: When people talk about what white Americans should be willing to do to help African Americans in this country, which of the following two statements comes closer to your view...?



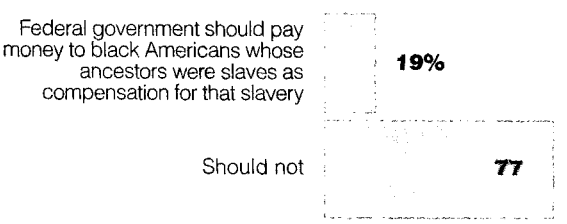
Source: *Washington Post*, Kaiser Family Foundation, Harvard University Survey Project, August-September 1995.

Question: Do you think...?



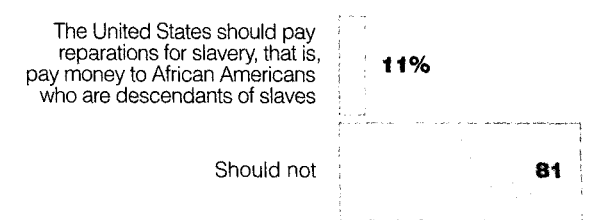
Source: ABCNews.com, June–July 2000.

Question: Do you think...?



Source: : ABC News, June 1997.

Question: Do you think...?



Source: : Fox News, March 2001.

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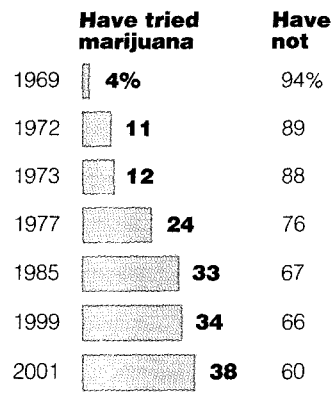
Attitudes Toward Marijuana

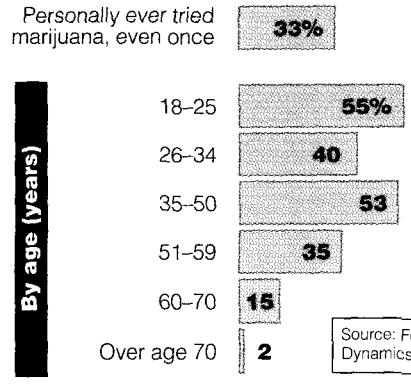
In 1969, only 4 percent of Americans admitted to the Gallup Organization that they had ever tried marijuana. Today, slightly under 40 percent say they have. A third of college freshmen, down from 53 percent in 1977, say it should be legalized. Americans are divided about whether possession of small amounts of marijuana should be treated as a criminal offense; they strongly support allowing doctors to prescribe marijuana for medical purposes to treat patients.

Question: Keeping in mind that all of your answers in this survey are confidential...?



Source: For 1969-2000, the Gallup Organization, for 2001, the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, February 2001.

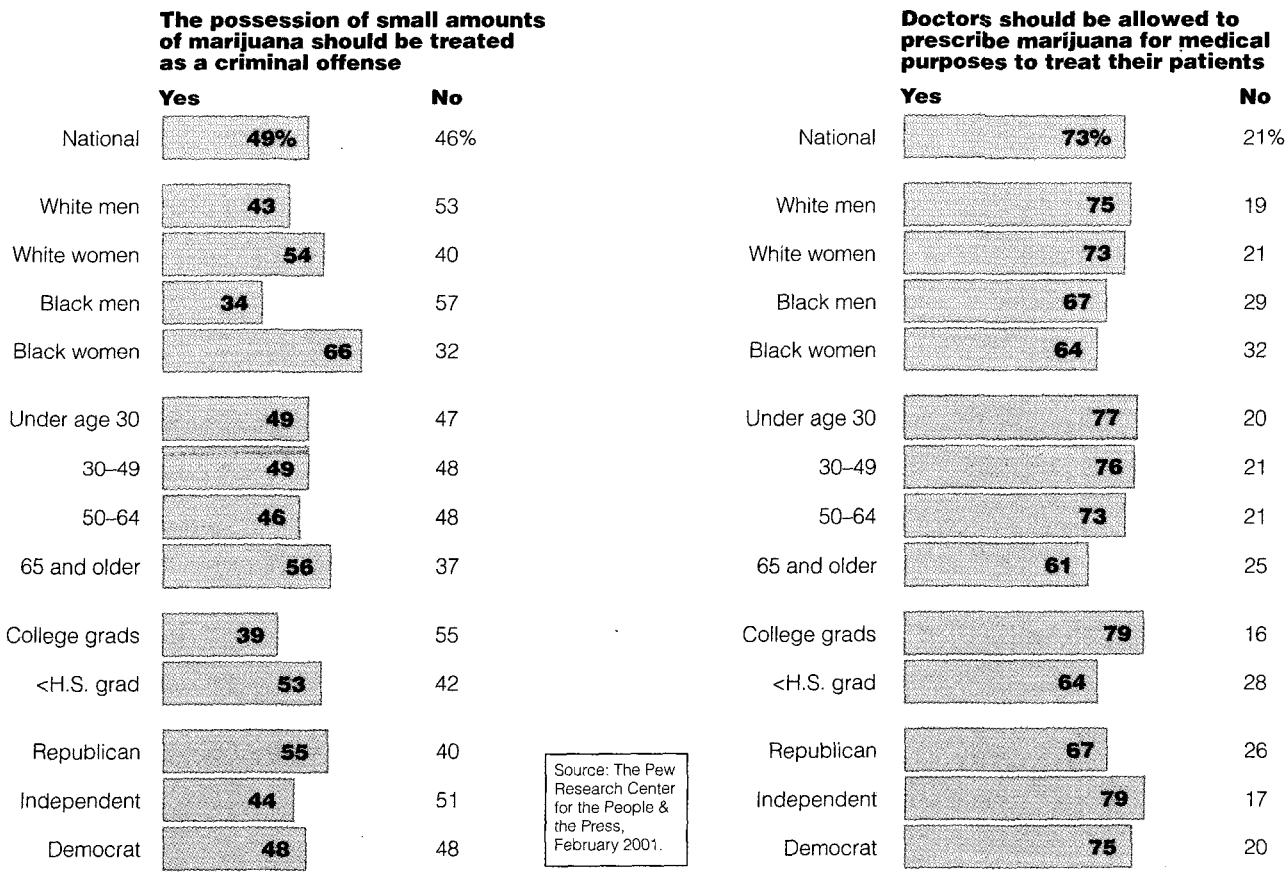
Question: By the way, and this is totally confidential, have you...?



Source: Fox News/Opinion Dynamics, March 2001.

Since 1969, the University of California at Los Angeles has been asking a sample of freshmen at universities and colleges around the country whether marijuana should be legalized. In 1969, 19 percent said it should. Fifty-three percent, the highest proportion in this time series, gave that response in 1977. In 1999, 34 percent said it should be legalized.

Question: *Do you think...?*



Source: The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, February 2001.

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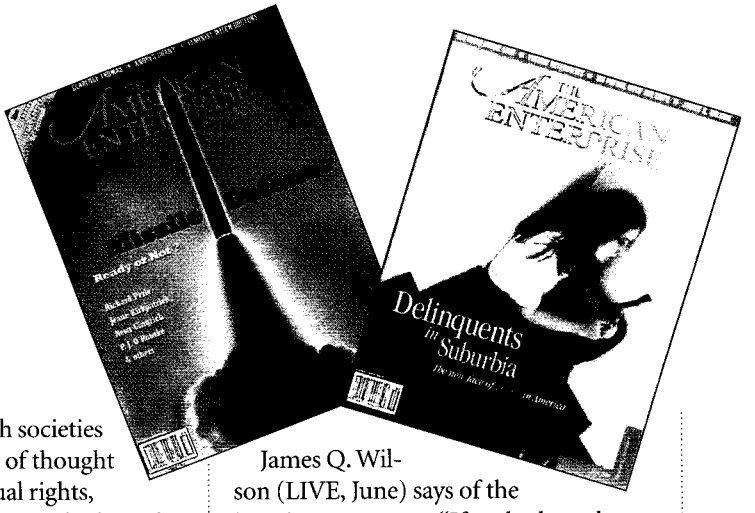
the Mail



Being from England, I can fully understand the objections of American liberals to National Missile Defense described by P. J. O'Rourke ("No-Nukes Turn Pro-Nuke," April/May). I think I can explain these objections since I agree with them.

In the 1980s movie *WarGames,* the warmongering supercomputer discovers the futility of nuclear war by playing out endless tactical scenarios that inevitably end in a "stalemate": the utter destruction of all warring parties involved. The supercomputer eventually realizes that there can only be losers in such a conflict. We are currently living under an uneasy peace when it comes to nuclear war. No nation would be suicidal enough to launch a nuclear attack on another, as it would only result in its own annihilation.

Thus, if one country creates a defense against nuclear attack, it becomes able to successfully launch a nuclear attack without fearing a reprisal in kind. Ironically, nuclear war is made *more* likely by the existence of such a system. This is why American "liberals" fear National Missile Defense. They feel that no country, not even America, should have this kind of devastating superiority.

Tim Horne
London, England

I read with great interest your issue on missile defense systems ("Missile Defense: Ready or Not?" April/May). In America and other countries, logic might prevail as the primary decision-making force but in the majority of "rogue nations" fundamentalist religion and political prowess are the main forces used to hold onto power and control the masses. Iran is a perfect example of the religious mandate, and China a perfect example of the political mandate. The things that societies like ours value the most, such societies value the least. Freedom of thought and expression, individual rights, civil rights, and voting are not high on the priority list of radical groups in the Middle East and China.

Every time Islamic revolutionaries bomb our embassies in Africa or blow up our ships in the Arabian Gulf, they gain more support within their own countries. While extremists may not speak for the majority, sympathy within certain nations lies heavily with the extremists. In order to deal with these nations, America needs to think like they do.

Yet your missile defense issue focused on strictly defensive schemes. Why not develop an *offensive* posture to put these rogue nations on notice? The secretary of state could quietly call on these folks and advise them of the consequences of belligerent behavior.

Our foreign policy has been one of *American* logic and rationale. It sounds wonderful to us. Yet the rogues of the world simply continue doing whatever they wish. In the past, before such countries had acquired medium and long-range missiles, this was not a significant problem because it did not threaten our shores, our lives, and our way of life.

Today, Chinese generals openly threaten our major cities. Osama bin Laden tells his follower it is the duty of each Muslim to kill Americans. There are people waiting in line to become martyrs.

As long as the people of certain states accept fanatic radicalism as normal and righteous, and we retain our strictly defensive posture, we cannot stop massive terrorist destruction. The bull's eye is on America.

John F. Tyreman
Tucson, Arizona

James Q. Wilson (LIVE, June) says of the imprisonment rate: "If we had a technique that would have prevented large numbers of people…from committing any serious crimes, that would have been wonderful, but no such technique exists."

He is wrong; we have such a technique. When a robber or rapist is shot by his intended victim, not only does he fail to complete the crime, but his friends and acquaintances learn from his example (especially if society treats the resisting victim as a hero).

There is another benefit: Armed self-defense by private citizens lessens the need for police surveillance of potentially innocent young black males, and can avoid accusations of police brutality when a particularly violent criminal needs to be shot. It also reduces the danger of tragic errors in mistaken identity—NYC police would not have shot Amadou Diallo 41 times if the armed and dangerous rapist they sought was already dead at the hands of a neighborhood woman.

Frank Silbermann
New Orleans, Louisiana

The one thing more repulsive than what you describe in "Delinquents in Suburbia" (June) is the fact that people are only now starting to talk about this. Why did the older generation just turn the asylum over to the inmates back in the '60s? Baby boomers are destroying this society. And they are all going to live to 120, are never going to give up power, are never going to shut up, and my generation is going to be stuck paying for their prescription medicines forever.

Dana Adler
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The American Enterprise welcomes your comments. Send to "The Mail," The American Enterprise, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Or fax to (202) 862-5867. Or e-mail TAE@aei.org Please include your address and phone number. Published letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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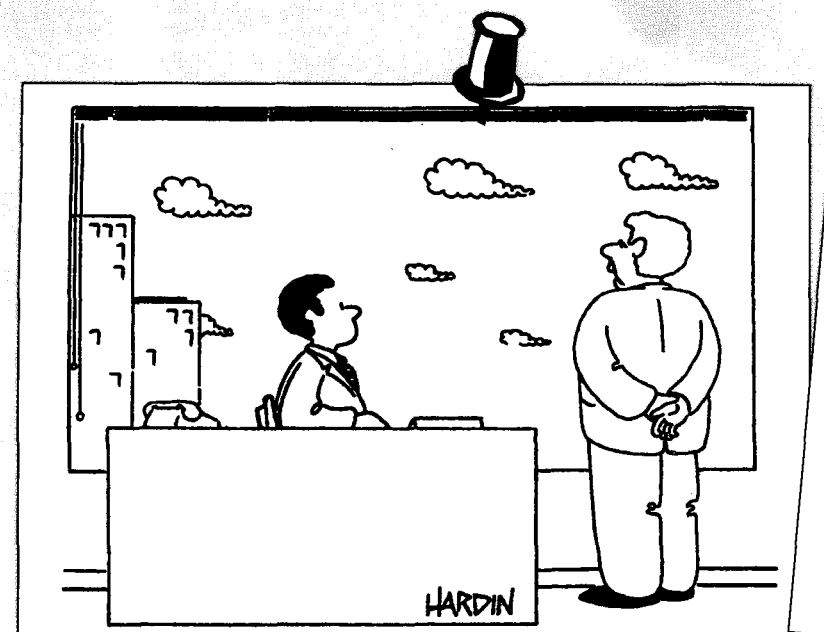

"I know the difference between right and wrong, Hargrove; but I'm also aware of the similarities."

"...I'm prescribing a depressant."

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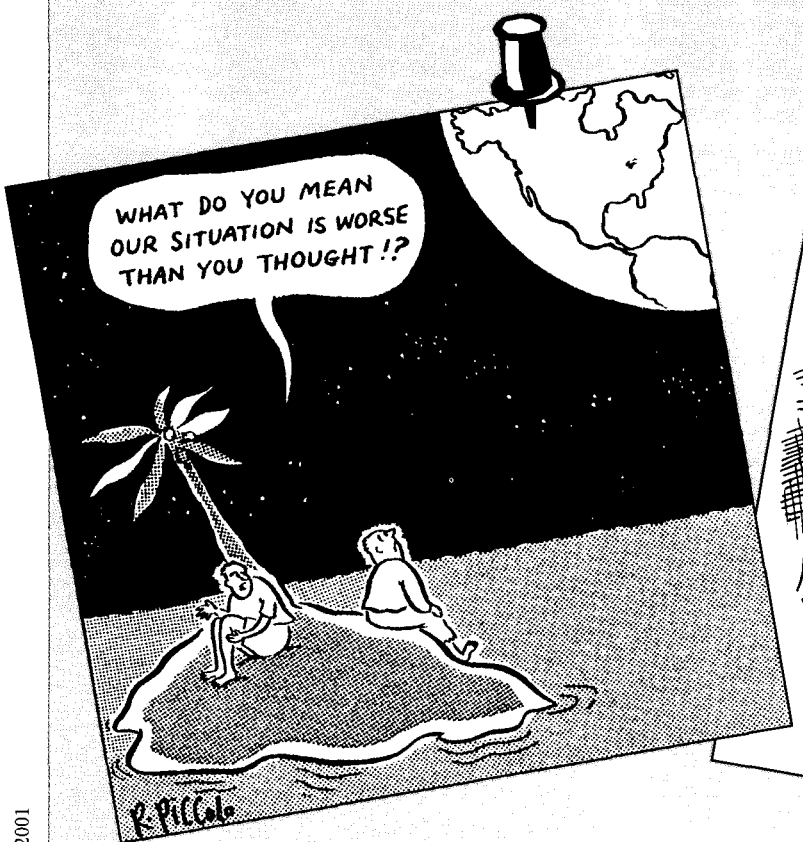

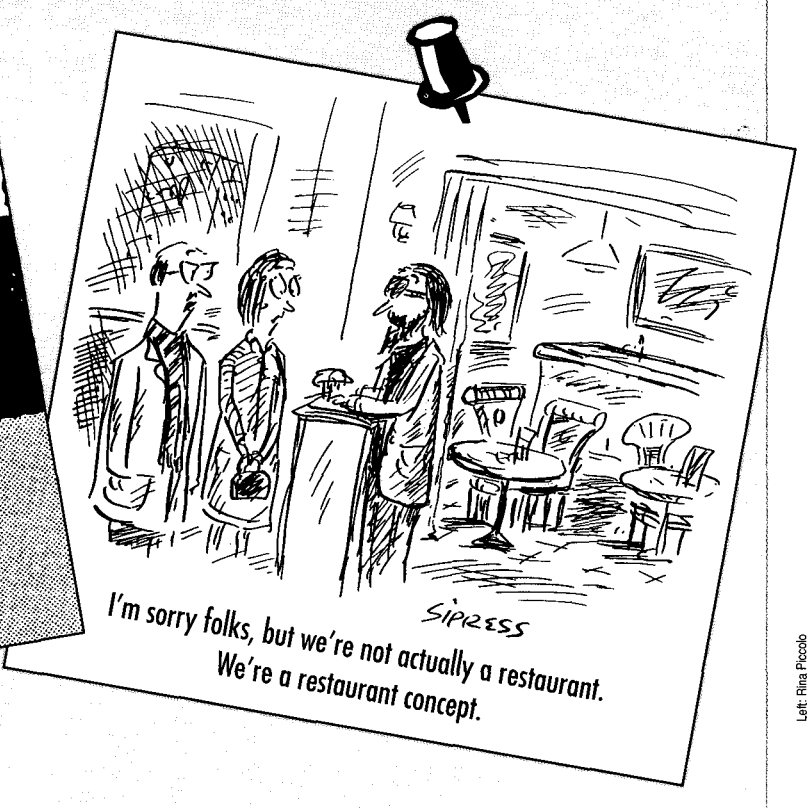

I'm sorry folks, but we're not actually a restaurant. We're a restaurant concept.

Left: Rina Piccolo

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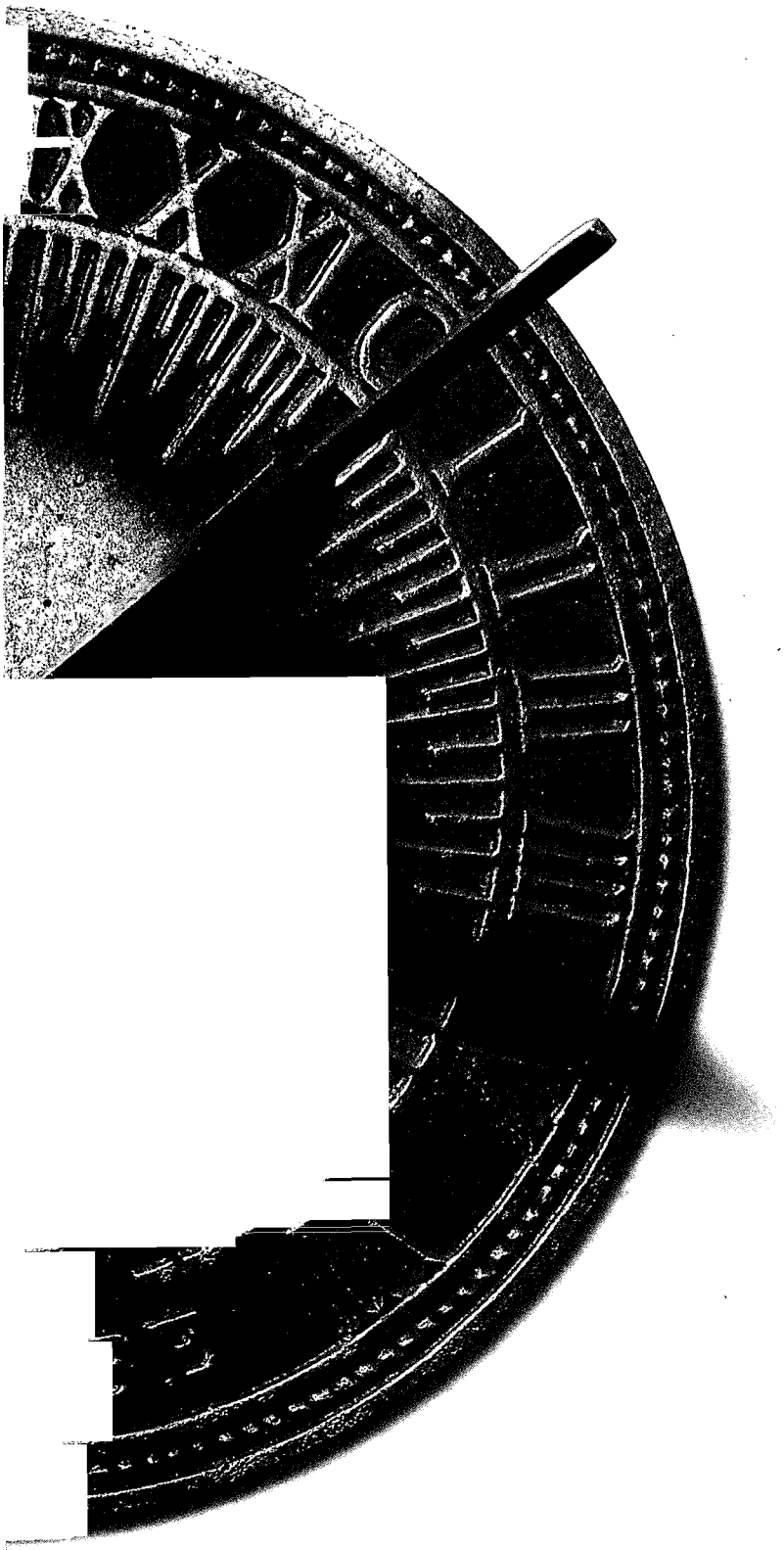
Mr. Kessenich teaches the most innovative math class under the sun.



They've been around for centuries. But only Jeremy Kessenich had the vision to see that designing and building sundials could teach essential math principles in a way that students would actually enjoy.

This spring, his high school class will paint a sundial face on the playground at the local elementary school. By standing at its center, grade schoolers become the rod that casts the time-telling shadow—and a new generation will experience the power, and fun, of mathematics.

For his bright ideas, State Farm is pleased to present Mr. Kessenich with our Good Neighbor Teacher Award™ and to donate $10,000 to his school, Mt. Horeb High in Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin.

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